Diane Paulette Payment

"The Free People — Otipemisiwak"

Batoche, Saskatchewan 1870-1930

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DEDICATION

To the memory of Médéric McDougall (1902-1989), Métis leader and patriot, who was an inspiration and a supporter of this work.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Acronyms 7

Acknowledgements 9

Preface 11
Notes 14

Introduction 17
Notes 24

I Society and Way of Life 31
Notes 80

II Relations with the Clergy 107
Notes 132

III Political Action, 1873-1910 145
Notes 176

IV The Economy 203
Notes 238

V Land Claims in the South Saskatchewan River Area 257
Notes 289

Conclusion 311
Notes 315

Appendices

A Notes on the Quantitative Analysis of Homestead Declarations 317

B Subjects Interviewed 321

C Population of Métis Wintering at the St-Laurent-de-Grandin Mission, 31 December 1871 329

D The 74 Families of Batoche Parish, 1924 331

E Métis Songs 333

F Claims for Losses Suffered in 1885, Batoche and vicinity 337

G Beneficiaries of Land Scrip, Batoche and vicinity, 1885-87 343

H Beneficiaries of Land Scrip, Batoche and vicinity, 1900 347

Bibliography 351

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ACRONYMS

DA	Deschâtelets Archives, Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Ottawa
DCB	Dictionary of Canadian Biography
EAA	Edmonton Archdiocese Archives
GA	Glenbow Archives
GNMA	Grey Nuns of Montreal Archives
HBCA	Hudson's Bay Company Archives
NA	National Archives of Canada
OMI	Oblates of Mary Immaculate
PAA	Provincial Archives of Alberta
PADA	Prince Albert Diocese Archives
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba
SABS	Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatoon
SBAA	St. Boniface Archdiocese Archives
SHSBA	Société Historique de Saint-Boniface Archives
SLBS	Saskatchewan, Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources, Land Surveys Branch
UAA	University of Alberta Archives

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I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of the elders of Batoche, Duck Lake and St. Louis (Saskatchewan). Their recollections allowed us to present "another truth."

PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to present, on the basis of both written and oral sources, a new and more comprehensive insight into a Métis community in the North-West in the late 19th century.

Batoche has traditionally been portrayed as the seat of the North-West Rebellion, the site of the Métis' last stand and "defeat" to be followed shortly after by their social and economic disintegration. An in-depth comprehensive study of the Métis communities along the South Saskatchewan River between 1870 and 1930, in particular Fish Creek, Batoche, St. Laurent (St-Laurent-de-Grandin) and St. Louis (St-Louis-de-Langevin) disputes this view and suggests continuity of political, social and economic activity. There was no mass exodus by the Métis after 1885. In fact, some of the families which sought refuge across the border and further north eventually returned to the "homeland." The society that we see at the turn of the century was one where the family and culture assisted in the identity of its members as Métis; a society determined to direct its own economy and which, by political means, asserted its "rights." Batoche and surrounding communities were beset with many problems facing a society in transition. But for a few decades after 1885, "les gens libres" (the free people) endeavoured to control their own destiny.

METHODOLOGY

The documentary sources were extensive and in many cases largely untapped. Among the more important primary materials were the correspondence and accounts of Oblate priests and brothers who served at the numerous missions in the Saskatchewan district. The missionaries' perception of Métis values and lifestyle, and more importantly, the reactions of the Métis to religious authority and its code of behaviour, sheds light on the factors shaping the close yet at times tenuous relationship between the two. Government records such as the Homestead and Lands Branch files of the Department of the Interior where the Métis had to apply for land grants illustrates the inherent conflict between two cultures.

Scrip files and other related material provided evidence of the various options exercised by the Métis as well as government policy on this issue. Both church and government records, however, provide only a partial and incomplete account of the interaction with the Métis. In a sense they reflect the views and reactions of those formulating or implementing policies without revealing personal feelings or reactions about the Métis. The same gap can be found in fur traders' journals and British or French travellers' accounts. They often reveal more about European values than about the culture and activities of the Amerindians and Métis.

The testimonies we received directly from the Métis generally came from the merchants/traders and politicians, and not from the more numerous farmers or "freighters." The petitions sent by the Métis to various levels of government form somewhat of an exception. They were usually at least inspired by the rank and file Métis, if not always written by them. The Métis left few personal accounts, memoirs or journals, with the exception of Louis Riel and Louis Schmidt. For that matter, Louis Goulet and Marie-Rose Smith (née Delorme) also left important accounts of their experiences as well as those of their contemporaries. Others such as Gabriel Dumont and Xavier Letendre dictated accounts or reminiscences. Some records of early Métis associations provide insight into the significant issues and developments of the community.[1] But all in all very few direct testimonies of day-to-day life, particularly the activities of women, the family and so-called "private" affairs have survived, at least not in writing.

Métis education was not based so much on schooling as on practical experience and by elders' example. In their native tradition, records were transmitted orally:

> *For the most part, the Métis culture has been recorded in the hearts and minds of the Métis people and then passed down through the family and community grapevine.*[2]

The informal family narrative transmitted from generation to generation is particularly important with respect to the Métis, a minority group considered at the periphery of major issues and whose activities were therefore largely unrecorded by the contemporaries.

To reconstruct an authentic version of the past, it is important to draw on various sources. Oral history is one of these. Its validity, much like that of the written document, depends largely on the skill of the researcher in evaluating testimonies and data.[3] In the context of this study, prior intensive research was done to prepare for each interview whenever possible. In some cases, the testimonies of interviewees could be corroborated but generally, reliability of the testimony was strengthened through repeated contact and cross-checks, both formal and informal. A fairly large sample of 28 interviews, conducted at various intervals between 1976 and 1983 (see list, Appendix B), and an adaptable questionnaire provided an information base for our analysis. Finally, my long-term involvement with and commitment to the project meant increased rapport with the community itself, and on my part, greater comprehension of its values and culture. Also, the elderly Métis interviewed had generally experienced or witnessed the way of life, customs, practices and events they reported. Although time may have altered or perhaps romanticized their recollections, their "long-term" memory, or the tendency of many seniors to remember the past better than the present, was also an important factor.

Notes

Preface

1 We found an account of the Manitoba Métis situation and, to a lesser extent of the South Saskatchewan River Métis, in the papers of the Société historique métisse covering the period ca. 1891-1950, deposited at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

2 Jean-Paul Claude,"Métis Memories," *New Breed*, Vol. 15, No. 6 (June 1984), p. 25.

3 See David K. Dunaway and Willa K. Baum, eds., *Oral History, An Interdisciplinary Anthology*, The American Association for State and Local History, Nashville, 1984; in particular Ruth Finnegan, "A Note on Oral Tradition and Historical Evidence," pp. 107-15.

EPIGRAPH

"We left Manitoba because we were not free, and we came here to what was still a wild country in order to be free. And still they will not leave us alone."

Gabriel Dumont, Batoche, about 1903
(Provincial Archives of Manitoba, MG10, F1, "Mémoires dictés par Gabriel Dumont")

INTRODUCTION

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The 19th century

The writings of explorers and travellers in North America in the 17th and 18th centuries reveal the European view of both the "noble" and "ignoble savage."[1] Increased contact between North American Indians or natives (Amerindians) and Europeans, however, gradually altered initial European perceptions of Canada's native peoples. European imperialist views of the 19th century weakened the concept of "natural man" and strengthened the image of the inferiority and barbarism of native peoples.[2] The racist theories of the 19th century were also applied to the "mixed-blood" or Métis.

The polygenists, for example, believed in the multiple origins of mankind and the innate superiority of certain races. They condemned any mixing of races as destructive and resulting in "a vicious type of half-breed."[3] According to de Gobineau, a proponent of the above theory, mixed-blood peoples were "beautiful without strength, strong without intelligence and if intelligent, both weak and ugly."[4] The theory of evolution and natural selection advanced by Charles Darwin also implied superior and inferior species of mankind. The classification of man according to racial features, using the Caucasians as models, was used to justify the exploitation and conquest of the native populations in Africa, Asia and America. Miscegenation or mixing of races as in the cases of the *Mestizos* and "Coloureds" was viewed not only as degenerative but filthy.[5]

In the literature and historical writings of the late 19th century, the Métis were generally perceived as an uncivilized people whose culture and values were an obstacle to economic and social progress or the civilized aspirations of Eurocanadians. Victorian travellers such as Captain Butler, the Earl of Southesk and the Marquis of Lorne might appreciate Métis hospitality and their abilities as hunters and interpreters but they perceived the Métis essentially as lazy, improvident and shifty.[6] French and French-Canadian literature was somewhat more sympathetic if also condescending. A French traveller's comment about the "racial" antecedents of Riel's mental state provides some insight into European perceptions of the consequences of mixed breeding. "He is a deeply religious man, but the combination of Indian and French blood in him seems to have produced an imbalance" [translation].[7] Similar interpretations were put forth by another observer of Amerindians and Métis. According to George E. Ellis, the Métis were more "troublesome than real Indians"; "the traits and characteristics of the red man prevail in them over those of whites ... Especially true when one parent is French ...."[8]

The situation of the Métis in Western Canada in the late 19th century was particularly difficult. In addition to being victims of the racism that marked the end of the Victorian era, Indians often rejected the Métis because of their European ancestry.[9] In the case of the Métis "Canadiens" or French-speaking Métis, they were also scorned by English-speaking Canadians for their French ancestry.

The 20th century

Unfortunately many of the above beliefs and opinions survived into the 20th century. Historical writings of the 1950s were still tainted with some of these racist beliefs. The "frontier" thesis and the "conflict of cultures" (white versus native) interpretation which were the basis of major writings of this period both viewed the absorption of the Métis or so-called weaker culture by the dominant society as inevitable.[10]

More recent studies have focused on the complex personality of Louis Riel.[11] The enigmatic leader is both revered and condemned, much as in the past.[12] Current research, undertaken primarily by the Métis themselves, has disputed the traditional interpretations of the Métis, Riel and government policies regarding land claims.[13] The shortage of Métis accounts and testimonies has often resulted in studies based solely on government, church and fur trade company records. An ethnocentric approach also limited the scope of many inquiries. All interpretations are conditional, by definition, by the cultural values and intelligence of the author. Historians and other professionals must be particularly skilled in perceiving what was not said or what was implied. A study of the Métis requires not only an appreciation of Métis values but consideration of both traditional and non-traditional sources. The "new" social history has produced some of the most pertinent and balanced perceptions of the Métis, more specifically by viewing them within a society founded on the fur trade.[14]

Some of the recent research on the Métis has focused on interdisciplinary approaches and a quantitative methodology. Compilation of census and genealogical data by D.N. Sprague and R.P. Frye[15] has facilitated the study of themes such as family and kinship, occupation and dispersal in the Red River Settlement. Irene Spry has suggested an economic rather than the traditional ethnic interpretation of Métis in this settlement[16] while Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer Brown have applied sociological and anthropological models to their analysis of particular Métis social groups.[17] Whether one chooses the essentially Marxist framework of class struggle and exploitation of Howard Adams[18] and more recently Ronald Bourgeault,[19] or the psycho-religious approach of Gilles Martel[20] and Emil Tremblay,[21] these studies provide new perspectives on the Métis.

HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF THE MÉTIS

Today, the term Métis is used in a broad sense to identify all mixed-blood (Native and European) people and non-treaty Indians. This definition is a 20th-century one, which identifies a "new people" or culture. Historically, in the 18th and 19th centuries, the word "Métis" or more correctly Métifs[22] identified a specific North-West society, who had its own culture and economic traditions. Their origins in Western Canada date back to the late 17th century, when French-Canadian voyageurs and Hudson's Bay Company employees began trading for furs in the area. The exigencies of the fur trade required the alliance and support of the native inhabitants. Marriage "à la façon du pays" (according to the custom of the country) was a basic component of social and economic interactions between the Eurocanadians and the Amerindians. Explorers, voyageurs and Hudson's Bay Company servants married mainly Saulteaux (Ojibwa) and Cree women, although there were also unions with the Déné (Montagnais-Chipewyan), Blackfoot and Sarcee who lived further into the interior. The descendants of these Amerindians and French Canadians, mainly explorers and voyageurs from New-France (Quebec) in the 18th century or employees of the North West Company and other companies between 1760 and 1821, called themselves "Métifs," "Bois-Brûlés," ("broulés" [sic] and "les gens libres" (the free people). The offspring of these Amerindians and Scottish and English employees of the Hudson's Bay Company were identified alternately as "Natives," "Mixed-bloods" and "Halfbreeds."[23] The latter term, although biologically incorrect after the first generation, did not have in the pre-1870 period the pejorative connotation that it later acquired. It appears, at least in the beginning, that these people may not have emphasized their European ancestry to the extent that Eurocanadian traders and missionaries did. It is almost impossible to retrace the first generation of Métis [French-speaking] and Halfbreeds [English-speaking] born in the North-West. We know very little about the Amerindian mothers, "Suzanne Crise" or "Marguerite Saulteuse" mentioned in the parish registries.[24] The Amerindian traditions and lifestyle probably predominated over the European at the isolated fur trade camps and posts, providing a common native milieu rather than a discernable "French," "Scottish" or "English" one.

Religious beliefs, language and culture as well as occupation generally distinguished Métis from Halfbreeds in the Red River Settlement.[25] But the distinctions were also blurred. There were many Métis who claimed Scottish as well as French-Canadian ancestry. Intermarriage between the two groups, usually motivated by social and economic factors, integrated one partner, more often the Halfbreed, into the parent Métis society. This trend is documented in the censuses of the Red River Settlement.[26] The Métis, who were largely Catholic and French-speaking (although in fact, they called themselves Métchifs, and used a patois of French and Cree), established themselves on riverlots in the parishes of St. Boniface, St. Norbert and St. François-Xavier. Their Protestant and English-speaking (generally an Amerindian-English dialect) compatriots settled in the parishes of the "Lower Settlement" north of the "Forks" (at the confluence of the Rouge and Assiniboine rivers). British kinship and fur trade connections enabled more Halfbreeds to rise to administrative positions (mainly postmasters) within the Hudson's Bay Company although it had begun to hire French-Canadians as voyageurs in the early 1800s. The traditional hierarchy and ethnic bias were reduced somewhat after the union of the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821. The Nor'Westers who obtained commissions in the new Company after 1821, fostered to a certain extent, the promotion of a few of their promising French-Canadian workers. Examples such as the appointment of Georges Deschambeault and Henry Fisher as Chief Traders and of Horace Bélanger as Chief Factor, are important if exceptional occurrences.[27] According to the Red River census and other records, the majority of Métis were engaged as labourers for the Hudson's Bay Company boat brigades on a seasonal basis or under contract at the trading posts in various districts.[28] But an increasing number also hunted, freighted (transported furs and merchandise) and traded independently.[29] Urbain Delorme, François Gingras, Narcisse Marion, Cuthbert and Daniel McGillis, Louis Letendre and Emmanuel Champagne were among a number of prosperous independent traders at Red River by the mid-19th century.

The Métis developed a national consciousness and acquired cohesiveness as a group during these years. Under the leadership of Cuthbert Grant, they rose in armed protest against economic sanctions on the sale of pemmican imposed by the Hudson's Bay Company. Métis bard, Pierre Falcon commemorated the Métis victory at "La Grenouillère" (the Battle of Seven Oaks) in 1816, with a "national hymn."[30] The trial of free trader Guillaume Sayer in 1849 provided another opportunity for the Métis to challenge the Company's authority.[31] The cry of "le commerce est libre" (commerce is free) followed the news that the Company's monopoly had been broken. The increasingly inept and unrepresentative Assiniboia Council, the Company's local political authority (1835-70) became the focus of subsequent protests as well.

The Métis saw themselves as a "new nation," as a distinct entity in the North-West. This claim, from a certain point of view, was justified.[32] In the Red River area, the descendents of Amerindians and Eurocanadians formed the majority in the population. Their way of life and economy were drawn from both ancestries. Some, described as "Métis Indiens,"[33] lived more according to native custom while the French-speaking Métis adopted European ways. A common language, the Catholic faith, a strong sense of French-Canadian heritage and perhaps more importantly, a stable kinship network resulting from two and three generations residing in the North-West, promoted national consciousness. One soon saw evidence of social classes reflecting the nature of occupations. There were, for example, the merchant and freighting entrepreneurs, composed of families such as the Lagimodières, Gingras, Marions, Kittsons and their relations. Also, there was a small but influential political elite of men such as François Bruneau, Louis Riel Sr. and James McKay in the 1850s and 1860s[34] and later succeeded by Riel Jr., Charles Nolin and Pierre Delorme.

Métis society, therefore, was not homogeneous. Differences in fur trade tradition, occupation and family ties had fostered various political and economic affiliations. The Breland, Dease and Hamelin families of St. François-Xavier (White Horse Plain), for example, were politically conservative, (favouring the status quo and the authority of the Hudson's Bay Company) while the Riels, Carrières, Lépines and Naults of St. Vital were adherents of free trade and self-government.[35] Similarly, the Goulets, Vennes and Charettes of St. Norbert wavered in their support of Riel and the resistance movement in 1869-70 while the Carons, St-Germains and Champagnes were strongly committed. The same diversity was in evidence at Point-à-Grouette (Ste. Agathe).[36] But the common bonds of cultural heritage and religion also ensured a certain solidarity. The majority of Métis rallied around Riel and supported the Provisional Government. The inability of this representative and legally constituted government to impose its authority and ensure the guarantees negotiated under the Manitoba Act, seriously undermined the Métis land base, eventually disrupted the Red River Métis society and economy, promoting its assimilation or exodus.

In addition to Red River, Métis communities had emerged in the Great Lakes region in the North-West. Settlement in the Great Lakes had preceded that of Red River and some families from the Great Lakes migrated to the Forks in the early 1800s.[37] Some Métis had also settled further west in the late 18th and early 19th century, more specifically around Lac Ste-Anne, Ile à la Crosse and in the Athabasca (le Rabasca) and MacKenzie River district. Although the ethnic origins of the so-called "Western Métis" were similar to that of the Red River Métis there were important distinctions. Many of these families were of Déné/French-Canadian origin and their voyageur ancestors had no links with Red River. There is evidence that these historical circumstances, the environment and their economic activities on which they relied produced a group with distinctive traditions and lifestyle.[38]

By the mid-19th century, Métis from Red River had established "hivernements" (wintering camps) in the Qu'Appelle valley, at Touchwood Hills and in the vicinity of Wood Mountain and the Cypress Hills, a territory that is now part of Saskatchewan. One of the most important of these early gathering places was at Chapelle coulee (near present-day Willow-Bunch).[39] By the late 1860s, the Métis of St. François-Xavier and of parishes along the Red River had also established "hivernements" or wintering camps further north and west: at Prairie Ronde (present-day Dundurn), Grosse-Butte (near present-day Humboldt) and Petite-Ville (vicinity of present-day Fish Creek) on the west bank of the South Saskatchewan River.[40] It was at the latter site that the hunting party under Gabriel Dumont settled permanently in 1870. Petite-Ville became the nucleus of the St. Laurent Settlement as the Métis put down roots between 1872 and 1882.

These Métis were "Riel's People," a politically conscious group of traders/merchants with particular traditions and aspirations. Many Métis families after having their lands arbitrarily confiscated moved from Manitoba to the new settlement and joined the resistance movement against the "outsiders." The Métis who migrated to the South Saskatchewan River district sought a new homeland in a region yet unclaimed by Eurocanadians. They wished to be left alone, not as often stated, to turn their backs on progress, but to gradually adapt to playing an important role in the political and economic development of the Canadian North-West.

Notes

Introduction

1 For analysis of Eurocanadian perceptions about natives, see Cornelius J. Jaenen, *Friend and Foe* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), and Donald B. Smith, *"Le Sauvage"* (Ville La Salle: Hurtubise HMH, 1979).

2 Pierre Simoni, "Science anthropologique et racisme à l'époque de l'expansion coloniale: le cas du Grand dictionnaire universel du XIX^{e} siècle de Pierre Larousse," *Historical Papers/Communications historiques* (1980), pp. 167-84. This incisive article describes the development and pervasiveness of racist thought in the 19th century.

3 Christine Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. 10, cited from A. de Gobineau, *The Inequality of Human Races* (London: N.p., 1915).

4 Ibid., p. 12.

5 Ibid., p. 23.

6 William F. Butler, *The Wild North Land* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1968); Earl of Southesk, *Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains* (Tokyo: C.E. Tuttle & Co., 1967); Marquis of Lorne (Duc d'Argyll), *Manitoba and the North-West Territory*, (London: Caustin, 1881); ibid., *Memories of Canada and Scotland*, (Montreal: Dawson, 1884).

7 Robert de Roquebrune, *D'un océan à l'autre* (Paris: Editions du Nouveau Monde, 1924).

8 George E. Ellis, *The Red Man and the White Man in North America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1882), p. 626.

9 D. Bruce Sealy and Verna J. Kirkness, eds., *Indians without Tipis* (Agincourt: The Book Society of Canada, 1974), p. 11.

10 See, for example, George F.G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), and M. Giraud, *Le Métis canadien* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1945).

11 Gilles Martel, *Le messianisme de Louis Riel (1884-1885)* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1984); Thomas Flanagan, *Louis David Riel: Prophet of the New World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979); Gilles Martel, Glen Campbell and Thomas Flanagan, *Louis Riel: Poésies de Jeunesse* (St. Boniface: Éditions du Blé, 1977), and Bernard Saint-Aubin, *Louis Riel, un destin tragique* (Montréal: La Presse, 1985).

12 See, for example, the conflicting views expressed by Thomas Flanagan, in *Louis David Riel: Prophet of the New World*, op. cit., and in *Riel and the Rebellion of 1885 Reconsidered* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1983).

13 On this subject see the studies of D. Bruce Sealy and D.N. Sprague, *Statutory Land Rights of the Manitoba Métis* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation Press, 1975); D.N. Sprague, "The Manitoba Land Question, 1870-1882," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (1980), pp. 74-84; and Manitoba Métis Federation, *Riverlots and Scrip, Elements of Métis Aboriginal Rights* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation Press, 1978).

14 See, in particular, Sylvia Van Kirk, *"Many Tender Ties," Women in Fur Trade Society, 1670-1820* (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer Publishing Ltd., 1980); Jennifer S.H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980).

15 D.N. Sprague and R.P. Frye, eds., *The Genealogy of the First Métis Nation* (Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1983).

16 Irene Spry, "The Métis and Mixed-Bloods of Rupert's Land before 1870," paper presented at the First North American Métis Conference (Chicago: September 1981).

17 Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S.H. Brown, *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985).

18 H. Adams, *Prison of Grass* (Toronto: General Publishing, 1975).

19 Series of articles by Ronald Bourgeault entitled "Métis History, The Age of British Colonialism and Imperialism 1821-70," *New Breed*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (February 1984), pp. 18-19; No. 4 (April 1984), pp. 12-13; No. 6 (June 1984), pp. 18-19.

20 Gilles Martel, op. cit.

21 Emil Tremblay, *The Shadow of Riel* (Ituna: The Icon Press, 1984).

22 "Métif" is the old French pronunciation used by the Métis. The missionaries also report the term in their correspondence. See also article by Métis author Guillaume Charette, "Les Métis," in *Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface*, Vol. 43 (1944), pp. 174-87.

23 On the origins and use of various terms see: J.E. Foster, "The Country-born in the Red River Settlement, 1820-1850," Ph.D. thesis, University of Alberta, 1973; "The Origins of the Mixed Bloods in the Canadian West," in *Essays in Honour of Lewis Gwynne Thomas*, Lewis H. Thomas, ed. (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1976), pp. 71-80.

24 The wives of the voyageurs and fur traders were usually only identified under their Christian or baptismal names in the parish registers of Red River.

25 On the Métis society at Red River, see P.R. Mailhot and D.N. Sprague, "Persistent Settlers: The Dispersal and Resettlement of the Red River Métis, 1870-1885," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (1985), pp. 1-30. Less has been written lately on the English-speaking Métis at Red River. Although Robert Coutts has done a well-documented history into one of these communities: "St. Andrew's Parish, 1829-1929 and the Church Missionary Society in Red River," Manuscript on file, National Historic Parks and Sites, Parks Service, Environment Canada, Winnipeg, 1985.

26 D.N. Sprague and R.P. Frye, *The Genealogy of the First Métis Nation*, op. cit., Table I: "Genealogies of Red River Households, 1810-70."

27 Chief Trader Georges Deschambeault referred bitterly to the discriminatory policies of the Hudson's Bay Company towards French Canadians in his correspondence. He wrote "... It is well known all over the country that I have been treated with the greatest injustice for no other reason but because I am of French origin" [translation]. St. Boniface Archdiocese Archives, letter from Georges Deschambeault to Sir H. Northcote, June, 1870. Regarding the noteworthy career of the only French Canadian to attain the rank of Chief Factor see L.A. Prud'homme, "Horace Bélanger, facteur-en-chef de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson," *Revue Canadienne*, Vol. 27 (1891), pp. 464-68.

28 Philip Goldring, "Papers on the Labour System of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1821-1900, Vol. I," Manuscript Report Series No. 362 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1979), pp. 62-63; D.N. Sprague and R.P. Frye, op. cit., Table 3: "Contract HBC employees recruited or retired to Red River, 1821-70."

29 R. Gosman, "The Riel and Lagimodière Families in Métis Society 1840-1860," Parks Canada, Manuscript Report Series No. 171 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1977).

30 The political, social and economic antecedents to the Battle of Seven Oaks which fuelled Métis nationalism is documented by Marcel Giraud in *Le Métis canadien* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1945), pp. 551-99.

31 For a detailed account of the trial see W.L. Morton to Eden Colville, *London Correspondence Inward, 1849-1852*. E.E. Rich and A.M. Johnson, eds. (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1956), Publication No. 19).

32 For incisive references to this principle see A.S. Morton, "The New Nation, The Métis," reprinted in A. Lussier and D.B. Sealy, *The Other Natives the/les Métis*, 1700-1885 (Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation Press, 1978), Vol. 1, pp. 27-37 and more recently, J.E. Foster, "The Métis: The People and the Term," in A.S. Lussier, ed., *Riel Mini-Conference Papers* (Winnipeg: Manitoba, Métis Federation Press, 1979), pp. 84-92. This concept was also promoted by members of the Union Nationale Métisse de Saint-Joseph of Manitoba. See the letter of Martin Jérôme to Maxime Goulet, 15 February 1928, St. Boniface Archdiocese Archives.

33 The reference was made by Louis Goulet, a Métis who traded and freighted in the Battleford district with respect to a partner, William Gladu, see Guillaume Charette, *L'Espace de Louis Goulet* (Winnipeg: Éditions Bois-Brûlés, 1976), p. 141.

34 Lionel Dorge, "The Métis and Canadien Councillors of Assiniboia," *The Beaver*, Vol. 305 (Summer 1974), pp. 12-19; Vol. 305 (Autumn 1974), pp. 39-45; Vol. 305 (Winter 1974), pp. 51-58. Louis Riel Sr. and other militant Métis and clergyman were not appointed to the Company-controlled Assiniboia Council.

35 These divisions are raised briefly by George F.G. Stanley in *The Birth of Western Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1963), p. 92 and can be documented from the Riel correspondence and the papers of the Société historique métisse (PAM, MG3, D2 and MG10, F1).

36 Nicole J.M. St-Onge, "Métis and Merchant Capital in Red River: The Decline of Pointe-à-Grouette, 1860-1885," M.A. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1983.

37 Jacqueline Peterson, "The People In-Between: Indian-White Marriage and the Growth of a Métis Culture in the Great Lakes Region, 1680-1830," Ph.D. thesis, University of Illinois, 1981.

38 This distinctiveness is raised by Philip T. Spaulding in "The Métis of Ile à la Crosse," Ph.D. thesis, University of Washington, 1970. Although more specific studies are needed, the current research of

Louise Zuk on the community of St. Albert in the 19th century also supports this interpretation.

39 Clovis Rondeau and Adrien Chabot, *Histoire de Willow Bunch, Saskatchewan, 1870-1970* (Gravelbourg: N.p., 1970). 2nd. ed.

40 Rita Schilling, *Gabriel's Children* (North Battleford: Turner-Warwick Printers, 1983), and Dana M. Grainger and Brian D. Ross, "Levé de l'emplacement de Petite-Ville (Saskatchewan)," *Research Bulletin/Bulletin de recherches* No. 143 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1980). About 60 families located at Petite-Ville between 1868-73.

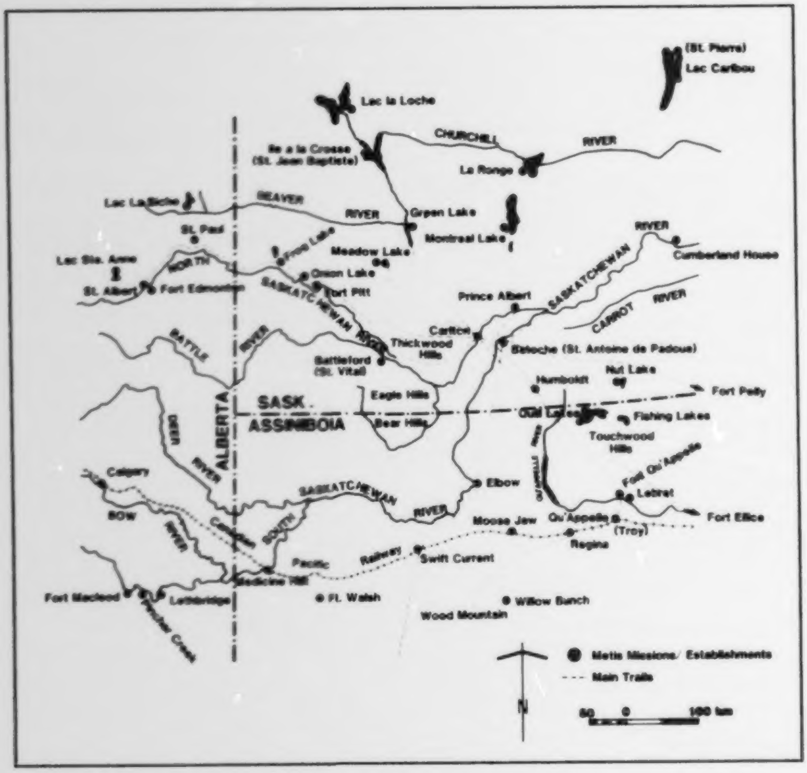

(St. Pierre)
Lac Caribou
Lac la Loche
CHURCHILL
RIVER
Ile a la Crosse
(St. Jean Baptiste)
La Ronge
Lac La Biche
BEAVER
RIVER
Green Lake
Montreal Lake
St. Paul
Frog Lake
Meadow Lake
Lac Ste. Anne
NORTH
Onion Lake
St. Albert
Fort Edmonton
Fort Pitt
SASKATCHEWAN
RIVER
Cumberland House
Prince Albert
SASKATCHEWAN RIVER
CARROT
RIVER
BATTLE
RIVER
Carlton
Thickwood Hills
Batoche (St. Antoine de Padoue)
Battleford
(St. Vital)
Humboldt
Nut Lake
Fort Pelly
SASK.
ASSINIBOIA
ALBERTA
Eagle Hills
Bear Hills
Quill Lakes
Fishing Lakes
Touchwood Hills
DEER
RIVER
QU'APPELLE RIVER
Fort Qu'Appelle
Calgary
Elbow
Lebret
SASKATCHEWAN
RIVER
BOW
RIVER
Moose Jaw
Qu'Appelle
Fort Ellice
(Troy)
Regina
Canadian
SOUTH
Pacific
Railway
Swift Current
Medicine Hat
Fort Macleod
Lethbridge
Ft. Walsh
Willow Bunch
Wood Mountain
Pincher Creek
N
Metis Missions/ Establishments
Main Trails
50
0
100 km

Fig. 1 The Métis centres in the North-West Territories, 1885-1905. *Map by David Elrick.*

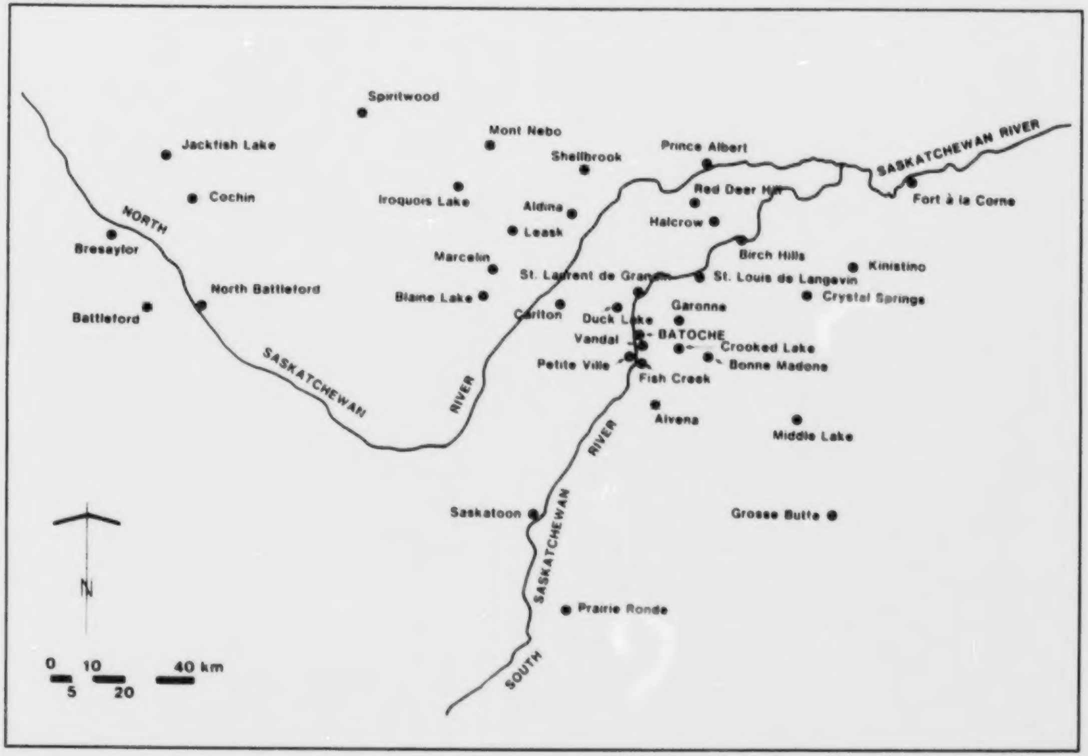

Spiritwood
Jackfish Lake
Cochin
Bresaylor
Battleford
North Battleford
NORTH
SASKATCHEWAN
RIVER
Mont Nebo
Shellbrook
Iroquois Lake
Aldina
Leask
Marcelin
Blaine Lake
Carlton
St. Laurent de Grandin
Prince Albert
Red Deer Hill
Halcrow
Birch Hills
St. Louis de Langevin
Kinistino
Crystal Springs
Garonne
Duck Lake
BATOCHE
Vandal
Crooked Lake
Bonne Madone
Petite Ville
Fish Creek
Alvena
Middle Lake
SASKATCHEWAN RIVER
Fort à la Corne
Saskatoon
Grosse Butte
Prairie Ronde
SOUTH
SASKATCHEWAN
RIVER
N
0
5
10
20
40 km

Fig. 2 Batoche and neighbouring villages. *Map by David Elrick.*

I SOCIETY AND WAY OF LIFE

POPULATION

The families of hunters and winterers who settled in Batoche and vicinity during the 1870s came almost entirely from the winter camps of the North-West. As early as the 1840s, several French Canadians had already settled around Fort Carlton with their Métis families. During the 1850s, a large number of Métis families were reportedly wintering in the area of the Qu'Appelle River, Tondre Mountain and Gros Ventres Fork.[1] But around 1865, there was a rapid increase in the number of winter camps in the Fort Carlton area. The most important one was the Petite Ville encampment at the Gros Ventres (South Saskatchewan) Fork.

It was at this time and following the political and social disintegration of the Red River community in 1869-70 that the Métis of the district decided to settle permanently on the banks of the South Saskatchewan. Other circumstances helped to hasten their decision. The area around Fort Carlton was not favourable for a permanent settlement. The soil was fairly swampy and unsuitable for farming, there was little wood, and it became increasing difficult to obtain provisions. Finally in 1870, a smallpox epidemic spread fear and consternation in the Métis camps. Although it made relatively few victims among the Saskatchewan Métis, the epidemic strengthened their decision to resettle.

On 31 December 1871, a meeting of the "notables" of the area was called in the St. Laurent winter camp under the chairmanship of Lawrence Clarke, chief officer of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Carlton, and with the participation of Father Alexis André, OMI, district superior.[2] Among the Métis were Isidore Dumont dit Aicawpow, Louison Letendre dit Batoche, Jean Dumont dit Chakasta, and Philippe Gariépy. The group's objective was to choose a site for a permanent settlement. After three years, they finally agreed on an area centred on the new St-Laurent-de-Grandin mission on the left bank of the South Saskatchewan. They set aside an area, "taking as the boundary of the colony the two sides of the river ten miles below the crossing and ten miles above the present winter camp [St. Laurent]" [translation].[3]

According to a Hudson's Bay Company census in 1871, the population of the new "St. Laurent Settlement" numbered 322 persons.[4] It rose to 450 in 1877 and to more than 500 people in the following year, after a wave of immigration from Manitoba.[5] This was less than the figure of 1500 forecast by chief officer Lawrence Clarke for 1873, but it was a stable rate which would be maintained during the following decade. All these figures must be regarded as approximate, for the population at the time was seasonal or transient. During the 1870s, the settlements were more like base camps. Among the first families to settle along the South Saskatchewan were the following:[6] in the north, at the Gariépy crossing (called Gardepuis in the local dialect), Philippe Gariépy, James Short, and Mrs. Marguerite Ouellette (widow of Pierre), there since 1870; in the south, on the left bank, some families clustered around the St-Laurent-de-Grandin mission since shortly after its founding in 1871. Among the first arrivals were Baptiste and Alexandre Hamelin, Antoine Fleury, Jonas Moreau and Pierre Landry. The families of Isidore and Jean Dumont, Joseph Ouellette, Antoine Ferguson (Fercuson), Charles Racette and Baptiste Boyer settled on the right bank. The Letendre family known as the Batoche family settled in the vicinity of the crossing set up by Xavier Letendre in 1873. They were joined at the same time by the families of Joseph "Dodet" and Baptisens Parenteau, Cuthbert "Corbet" Fayant (Failhant), and Pascal and Abraham Montour. Others settled in the vicinity of the Gabriel Dumont crossing, and Ignace Poitras and Baptiste Vandal had settled earlier in the south along the trail from Humboldt. Other families included in the 1870 enumeration of the district settled in the vicinity of Fort Carlton, and in particular at Duck Lake.

In 1878, another group of about 50 families arrived from Manitoba and the North-West Territories. Some of them had already spent time in the North-West, and in particular in the Qu'Appelle River, Wood Mountain, and Cypress Hills area, before joining their relatives or compatriots on the South Saskatchewan.

Another group, this one mainly from Manitoba, immigrated in the spring and summer of 1882. This was the largest contingent, and it turned Batoche, St. Laurent and the new parish of St. Louis into permanent settlements. According to a report by Father André in 1883, the population of the district was distributed as follows: St. Laurent (which included St. Louis at the time), 400; St. Antoine (which included Fish Creek at the time), 500; and Duck Lake, 600,[7] for a total of 1500 for the entire Métis population in the area, and 1000, if we exclude Duck Lake, which is not located on the South Saskatchewan River. However, these figures are not precise, for another diocesan report mentions 800 people [illegible] St. Antoine in 1883.[8] On the other hand, this figure takes into account the rural population of the parish. In the case of the 1884-85 census of the territory,[9] the Métis settlements are enumerated together with Prince Albert, thus making any valid reconstruction impossible. The limits of these communities were not clearly defined at the time. During the 1880s and 1890s, Batoche included not only a village but also a fairly extensive rural sector. The only clearly defined boundaries were those of the parish of St-Antoine-de-Padoue. In 1885, the parish extended to the north as far as lot 17; to the east it included the area of the present parish of St-Isidore-de-Bellevue, which was founded only in 1902; to the west it included the farms of the first concession of township 43 on the left bank of the South Saskatchewan River, and to the south it extended as far as the Tourond coulee (township 41-1-3), a distance of about 15 miles. The parish of the Immaculate Conception in Fish Creek was detached from Batoche in 1900. When the parish of St-Laurent-de-Grandin was closed in 1893, the residents on the right bank were divided almost equally between Batoche and St. Louis (according to distance).

As for civil authority, there was no local government during the territorial period. Municipalities were established only starting in 1909. The provincial and federal censuses taken before 1911 are very approximate as far as the Métis population on the South Saskatchewan is concerned.[10]

Parishes are thus the best sources of information on population. In fact, parish registers allow us to establish birth, marriage and death rates and, with less precision, to arrive at a figure for the population as a whole. According to a summary analysis of the Batoche registers for the period 1885-1920,[11] the birth rate was 7.28 percent and the death rate 3.5 percent: the difference between the two was therefore positive. Moreover, an annual average of 3.4 weddings for the same years leads us to believe that a high proportion of young people left the parish. The registers also show that families were large: about 10 to 12 children per couple living up to the age of 45 or completing more than 20 years of marriage. On the other hand, infant mortality (less than 5 years) was high, at four deaths per family. The relatively high birth rate helped to compensate for the many deaths that occurred during the flu epidemics in 1890-91 and 1897 and the tuberculosis epidemics between 1899 and 1904. During the period 1894-1904, there were 191 deaths, an average of 19 a year. The birth rate was barely able to make up for these losses. In sum, thanks to a high birth rate and large families, which filled the gaps left by deaths and departures, Batoche succeeded in maintaining a population figure of close to 450 inhabitants from 1885 to 1920.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND CLASS STRUCTURE

Though somewhat homogeneous in origin, the Métis community on the South Saskatchewan split into several groups soon after its foundation. The stratification did not appear in all its forms (social, economic, political, etc.), but there were several definite signs of social stratification. More than 75 percent of the population that settled in this area during the 1870s and 1880s came from Red River, the Pembina area and the St-Joseph (St. Joe) area in Dakota.[12] These families were united by close ties. Apart from a few exceptions, they were also of French Canadian and Amerindian (especially Cree or Saulteaux) descent. Those families whose European ancestors were Scottish, Irish or English had already been living for several generations in the Métis parishes in Manitoba, including St. Norbert and St. François-Xavier. They had become integrated in the French Canadian/Métis community by language, religion, mentality and lifestyle. These families continued to intermarry almost without exception, as they had been doing before settling in Saskatchewan. Life was simple, even for the well-to-do: people lived to satisfy immediate needs and followed the rhythm of the seasons. Until about 1878, Métis life revolved around the bison hunt. Places of residence were temporary, and food was based almost entirely on the proceeds of the hunt. Social relations were also influenced by it. Weddings were held mainly in January and February, while births seemed to be more frequent in late fall or early winter, which were periods of rest. After 1885 and at the turn of the century, daily life was less subject to seasonal fluctuations. The Métis moved about less frequently even though the economic situation called for some movement. More than French Canadians or other groups, the Métis kept up a non-sedentary lifestyle. But since the farm work they had to do from now on required some permanence, they now travelled less for reasons of work than to "visit relatives." Some of them went regularly to see their relatives who had settled further north or west of Batoche or even their "Manitoba cousins."[13]

During the 1870s, the population was small and therefore little stratified. In fact, the Métis were hunters-farmers or labourers with few aspirations to commercial or social leadership. Nonetheless certain individuals stood out[14] because of their economic or social activities, together with such factors as education, prestige, ethnic origin and even sex. Although status was largely influenced by commercial role, there was also intellectual and professional stratification. These two major divisions were complementary. We only need to think of the hunter-entrepreneur Gabriel Dumont on the one hand and the political leader Louis Riel on the other.

The missionary who accompanied the hunters on the prairies or wintered with them enjoyed special esteem and influence. The spiritual and religious leader Father André was the only one educated enough to interpret the "external" rules or laws laid down by the Eurocanadians. He had a great hold over the population. The same applied to the leader of a hunting expedition and the president of a local administrative council. Gabriel Dumont occupied these two positions during the 1870s. His herd and especially his horses were not only a sign of economic success, but also a source of prestige among his compatriots. Similarly, Louis(on) Letendre Sr., Isidore Dumont dit Aicawpow, Jean Dumont dit Chakasta, Joseph Hamelin and a few others who owned more than 15 horses each were also regarded as well off and influential.[15] Their prestige rested in addition on the length of time they had been in the area, that is since the 1860s. The entrepreneurs Xavier Letendre and Emmanuel Champagne in Batoche and Abraham Bélanger in Fish Creek also figured among the leaders of their community.[16] Those who had a specialized skill or knew how to read and write were also held in high regard, like the carpenters Ludger Gareau and George Ness and the teacher Ferdinand Ladret. During the 1880s, the community began to look more like a stratified society, even though all its members still enjoyed great mobility. The hunters and "freighters" saw their numbers and influence decrease. Batoche and vicinity were going through a transitional period. Moreover, the group of intellectuals increased with the arrival of the Manitoba politicians Louis Schmidt, Charles Nolin and Maxime Lépine, who breathed new life into the politics of the South Saskatchewan Métis. Schmidt in particular was educated and respected. These men were regarded as the leaders of the new community. A new class of hard-working farmers was also being formed: Jean Caron Sr., Joseph Ouellette, Baptiste Boucher and Joseph Pilon were known as serious men, tenacious and of sound judgment. They were heads of families who brought up their many children to be farmers. In the early 1880s, another group came to settle near the Métis. They were French Canadians (Quebeckers) and Frenchmen, who occupied land east of Batoche (in the area that would become Bellevue) to set up a business or to ply a trade. The Gareau brothers Ludger and Ozarie as well as Philippe Chamberland were among the first French Canadians to settle in the area. Among the French were Louis de St-Louis, Baron Huysmans de Neftal, and Louis Riguidel. Having become integrated into the Métis majority, these men filled certain gaps among the professionals and workers and were a major asset to the community.

During the 1890s and at the turn of the century, the situation changed in that several merchants left Batoche for more promising places or to pursue other more lucrative ventures. The clergy (e.g. Father Moulin), the teacher Miss Dorval and certain families assumed the leadership of the community. The majority of the people were farmers or unskilled workers. They had little training or social and political direction and little leisure to worry about the great issues of the day. In a rural society of the time,[17] this role fell traditionally to the parish priest, the elected officials of the parish council, the school commissioners, the postmaster, etc. The lay social and religious elite was generally recruited from among the entrepreneurs-merchants, skilled workers and some of the more prosperous farmers. Then came the artisans, followed by the unskilled and seasonal workers and the majority of farmers.[18] All these groups were present in Batoche.

Several factors determined membership in a group or an individual's social standing. Family antecedents, occupation and prestige were important criteria. Education seemed to be a way of reaching a "higher" class. In Batoche and St. Louis, there were examples of stratification within certain families.[19] On the other hand, it seems that the Métis attached less importance to wealth and conformism than did Eurocanadians. In several cases, an individual's personality, initiative and special talent were the source of his prestige and his ascendancy over his compatriots.

At the turn of the century, there were "cliques" or groupings by family, age, economic and social status and political interest to be found in Batoche and vicinity. The socio-economic elite included the Boucher, Letendre, Venne, Champagne and Fisher families. Some personalities stood out because of their specifically political interests or their community leadership: Charles Nolin, Maxime Lépine and Philippe Gariépy; they were generally opposed to the "leftist" group composed of Alex Fisher, Philippe Garnot, and Abraham Montour.[20] There was also the

"Caron clique"[21] (the brothers Pierre, Théophile and Patrice), who were very active on the parish council.

As in the European society of the time, Métis women found themselves at the lower end of the social scale. Their rank was, moreover, closely tied to that of their fathers or husbands. Nuns and spinsters of a certain age enjoyed a privileged status, but always according to special norms. As a general rule, women's role was essentially family-oriented or, to be precise, domestic. Their limited field of action offered them little prospect of social advancement outside the family. Moreover, advanced age and education seemed to be sources of prestige for them. Métis women were generally more educated than their husbands. Many of them knew how to read and write. These women were valued in a society where the spoken word prevailed over the written one, but their very limited role was to be at the service of the head of the family. The Métis owed their native heritage mainly to Cree and Saulteaux women. They generally valued the cultural and linguistic training they had received from their mothers and grandmothers. In their memoirs, Louis Riel and the Métis leaders insisted on the need to respect and honour one's maternal ancestors.[22]

FAMILY STRUCTURES AND FAMILY CONCEPTS

The Métis adopted the family in the large sense as the principle of colonization. Whole families, consisting sometimes of three generations, came to settle along the South Saskatchewan River. Let us take the case of Pierre (Pierriche) Parenteau, aged 68, and his son Moïse, who went to join their daughter and sister Marguerite, wife of Xavier Letendre, in 1882. Xavier's octogenarian parents also lived with him in the village. His elder brothers André and Louis and their large families also came to settle in the area. Their sisters Marie (wife of Emmanuel Champagne), Hélène (wife of Charles Thomas) and Sophie (wife of Edouard Dumont) also settled on farms very close to the village of Batoche.

This "chain migration" was practiced by almost all families. Parents, children, brothers and sisters settled on neighbouring or near-by lots, often close to their "in-laws." The Caron and Pilon families claimed several adjoining lands. The Vandal and Fidler families occupied lands south of Gabriel's (Gabriel Dumont's) Crossing, while the Boyer, Ouellette and Dumont families formed the largest contingent of colonists in St-Laurent-de-Grandin. The Lépine and Boucher families constituted by themselves almost the entire population of St. Louis (see maps, Figs. 46-49). This network of relationships gave the whole area, including Duck Lack to the west, the character of a "big family." The community was homogeneous, united (in spite of typical internal divisions) and, at least in the beginning, self-sufficient. The social and moral support that came with what is called "family immigration" made it easier to adapt to a new environment. However, in everyday life, the family in each rural community functioned more according to the principles of a nuclear society. Aged parents often stayed with one of their children, generally one of the younger ones. A father who had settled on a piece of land tried to reserve the neighbouring lands for his sons. This practice facilitated mutual aid and social interaction. A young couple usually moved into a separate home, even if it was close to that of their parents. An unmarried son who reached the age of majority generally left home, unless he was to inherit it or paid for his room and board. The 19th-century French Canadian/Métis family was guided by the principle of unity, the need to maintain traditional values and the primacy of the collectivity over the individual. It was a rural society which integrated the individual but imposed certain obligations on him for the sake of collective survival. The roles of each family member were clearly defined, even though precarious economic and social circumstances might cast doubt on these definitions and require family members to adapt and be flexible. The same conditions prevailed in several similar societies at that time. According to studies of the 19th-century rural American family, "the model that emerges is one of diversity and flexibility, the kind of controlled disorder that varied in accordance with pressing social and economic needs."[23]

Within the family, tasks were clearly divided. The father and the boys were responsible for the heavy farm work and often took seasonal jobs that brought in "wages." They would also "winter" far away with the animals. The mother and the girls were responsible for "housekeeping." They also cultivated the vegetable garden, which together with the hunt provided the Métis with their basic diet. Women rarely worked in the fields, but milking the cows, taking care of the chickens and collecting the eggs were included among their tasks.[24] Moreover, the family often received help from an aged grandparent or unmarried aunt they had taken in, or from a cousin they were putting up temporarily.

The roles of family members, though precisely defined, were at the same time interdependent. Grandparents were involved in the life of the nuclear family, both socially and economically. Widows usually lived with one of their children, whether at home with the heir or with one of their married daughters. They took part in domestic work and child care. Aged parents usually lived alone in a separate home, generally close to that of one of their children. Grandparents unable to do the farm work alone or take care of the maintenance called on their children for help. Old people enjoyed a certain prestige and were usually treated with respect and tenderness. There were no "fat pensions" (old-age pensions) and no welfare at the time, nor any retirement homes. The lives of aged parents remained intertwined with those of their children. During their active lives, people tried to put aside some savings for their old age to meet their needs. But custom required children to take care of their aged and needy parents.

The family or "household" was composed of father, mother and children. The father's role was to be "head of the family" and provider. He was the one in charge, at least in theory. Families were always enumerated under the father's name.[25] According to the teachings of the Church, the mother or wife had to submit to her husband. Such popular terms as "creature" or "the woman" suggested that they had a lower status, but in most families the mother was roughly equal to the father. She was responsible for the children's education and for running the household. Even though the structure was clearly patriarchal, in practice the mother exercised some authority in the home, and children gained their independence when they came of age or left home.

Few couples had a long family life cycle. Until the turn of the century, as a result of the high death rate of women due to too many or too closely spaced pregnancies, as well as of the generally lower life expectancy of men, few "lived out their lives" with the same spouse. According to a study done in the United States, before 1900 only 40 percent of the female population had an ideal family life cycle (up to age 50 with the same spouse).[26] Given the more precarious situation of a minority generally less favoured economically and more ravaged by disease, this percentage was probably lower in the Métis communities. But there were exceptions. A woman who had safely passed "the critical period" or fertile years had a good chance of reaching old age and hence of surviving her husband. According to rough calculations, the average age at death in Batoche during the period 1885-1905 was 63 for women and 56 for men,[27] and only 15 percent reached the age of 75.

Children were an important source of labour: boys outside the home and girls inside. However, since boys ensured the family's succession and provided an economic potential, they enjoyed more freedom. Young children were pampered, but as soon as they reached adolescence, they were called on to take part in domestic work. Orphans were never abandoned to strangers. They were taken in by their grandparents or an older sister or brother. In Batoche and vicinity, there were several examples of children "adopted" by relatives or even friends. It was not rare for a widower or widow to remarry twice[28] so that the children of two or three families found themselves living under the same roof. Young people married early, especially girls, who usually married before the age of 20 and often between 16 and 18. Boys married a little later, usually after the age of majority (21). For economic as much as social reasons, few people remained single. In fact, young girls still unmarried at the age of 25 were called old maids. While this condition was scorned in women, it was more acceptable in men because their financial contribution at home was deemed more important.

In Batoche, St. Laurent and St. Louis, people rarely married outsiders. Endogamy was practiced for several generations, almost without exception, until 1940. This was common practice in minority groups and rural societies having a distinct cultural identity and national consciousness. Social class and economic status or parents' occupation counted for much in the choice of a spouse. In Red River and especially St. François-Xavier, there were several examples of such "class marriages" between Métis of French-Canadian descent and those with Scottish or English ancestry.[29] During the first generation at least, the economic factor was paramount. It is interesting to note that the halfbreed (English Métis) spouse assimilated almost without exception to the Catholic Francophone group. In the South Saskatchewan communities, where the Métis were almost entirely of French-Canadian descent, people married within their social class and among relatives. When they arrived, the families were tied by third- and fourth-degree blood relations, and some, like the Letendre-Champagne, Boyer-Fisher and Dumont-Ouellette families, were first cousins by marriage. During the 1890s and 1900s, the marriages between the children of these families created a society that could be called a "family" in the wide sense. All possible combinations were present: one could be both the aunt and sister-in-law of the same person, or both the husband and cousin. Social intercourse was confined to a very narrow circle, and the ramifications of a first marriage created friendships leading to new unions. Family endogamy cured the insecurity and solitude that came with immigration. The closeness of the dwellings along the river and the custom of sons' settling on lands adjacent to those of their parents helped to develop strong emotional ties.

In Batoche, St. Laurent and St. Louis, there were several types of marriage: (1) unions or marriages according to social class, (2) intermarriage, limited in the first and second generations but more frequent in the third (at the turn of the century), (3) marriages between cousins of various degrees, beginning with the second generation, and (4) a few cases of exogamy, or marriage with a person from the outside, and hence cases of a person leaving the community and becoming integrated into another group. As an example of the first two categories, let us take the Boucher and Letendre families. Jean-Baptiste Boucher Sr. and his wife Caroline Espérance were unrelated as far as anyone knew. Their family of 14 living children had what is called an "ideal" life cycle (survival into adulthood, marriage, and death after 50), which was rare at the time.[30] Their daughter Emma became a Grey Nun, and their 13 other children married and raised families of five children on the average. Counting two second marriages, 10 of the spouses were Métis, and five were French Canadians from the same social class. This family was well regarded in the community. Its members married into the Letendre (Xavier), Lépine (Maxime), and Schmidt (Louis) families, and had what are called "good marriages," that is economically and socially advantageous ones. One Boucher girl married a sergeant of the North-West Mounted Police, an occupation considered particularly honourable at the time. From the 1890s on, the Boucher family and its descendants constituted the majority of the population of St. Louis.

In comparison, Xavier Letendre's family was better off economically, but it was more severely tried by infant mortality and illness which decimated its members in 1902. This family, one of the richest of the area between 1870 and 1895, became tied by marriage to other merchants' families, namely the Fisher, Venne, and Parenteau (Patrice) families. The spouses were not directly related. Moreover, there were several marriages between the family of Louis(on) Letendre (Xavier's older brother) and his third wife Angélique Dumas and Joseph Pilon's family. Two of Joseph's sons married two of Louis's daughters, and another Pilon son married one of Xavier Letendre's daughters. One of Louis's daughters, Henriette, married a first cousin, Daniel Dumas.[31] In almost all these families, marriages between blood relations and in-laws still occurred in the third generation or after 1910. The result was a network of very close relationships throughout the area.

To illustrate the third type of marriage, let us take the example of the Caron and Parenteau families (which did not leave the area). Jean Caron Sr., the patriarch of this family, was married to Marguerite Dumas, sister of Angélique Dumas-Letendre. Several of their children married into the family of Moïse Parenteau and Véronique St-Germain. Véronique St-Germain was the first cousin of Jean Caron (on the maternal side).

Moïse Parenteau was himself the son of Marie-Anne Caron, sister of Jean Caron, and hence the latter's nephew. There were thus several kinship ties between the two families. In 1887, Jean Caron Jr. married Virginie Parenteau, daughter of Moïse and Véronique. The bride and groom were second cousins. There were five other marriages between the two families. Dispensations for marrying a first or second cousin were frequently granted at the time. Several such dispensations were recorded in the Batoche and St. Laurent parish registers. It seems that there was some control over marriages between first cousins, but that marriages between second cousins were accepted if not encouraged. What made this practice dangerous from a hereditary point of view was the effect of double kinship between spouses and the persistence of this phenomenon until the third generation. For example, several children of Jean Caron Jr. and Virginie Parenteau, who were themselves cousins twice over, married their cousins. Frequent remarriages between sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law after the death of the first spouse reinforced still further the kinship ties between the children of these marriages. The third generation, who married between 1910 and 1925, was fairly limited in their choice of a spouse. The custom of marrying a Métis was nevertheless respected. They sometimes chose a spouse from among French Canadians, more often from among new French or Belgian settlers, and rarely from among Ukrainians. Religion, language, and the family network (in the broad sense) were important criteria. People felt a kind of fear of "foreigners" or even contempt. Sometimes, as for example in the Letendre and Dumas families, they re-established old family ties to Manitoba. It was only in the following generations (especially after 1925) that they began marrying outsiders, a practice that speeded assimilation or the loss of a distinct cultural identity.

WAY OF LIFE

Customs and traditions

Between 1870 and 1915, daily life in the Métis communities was marked by the continuation or persistence of traditional customs. Certain social and economic changes modified the behaviour or role of each family member, but the family remained the basic element in any activity. Life was generally characterized by sharing and by a certain equality between the sexes at work if not in social life. The interdependence between the members of a family extended to the community as a whole. This situation, combined with the restricted physical environment (at home) limited or even ruled out any possibility of private life or independent action.

As regards inheritance, according to some wills[32] and oral testimonies, the family plot usually went to one of the younger boys after the parents' death, while the girls shared the cattle. According to the testimony of some women before the "Commission on Rebellion Losses" in 1885, brides received furniture, kitchen utensils, bedding and animals as their dowry. The dowry was probably proportional to the parents' financial situation. Some old women stated that their trousseau had consisted only of their clothes and the wedding meal or party. Nevertheless, parents were always ready to help the newlyweds (with services, domestic production, etc.), and a very young couple often lived for some time with the husband's parents. Mutual aid and the community spirit extended also to neighbours, who were almost always cousins.

This was not, however, an idyllic society. On the contrary, social intercourse was at the same time charged with tensions, sensitivities and intrigues. Members of the same family were often divided by jealousy. Parents tended to give more freedom and privileges to boys[33] and sometimes had a favourite. There were family quarrels that lasted for years.[34] At a time when separation of the spouses was condemned by the religious authorities and divorce was inadmissible or inaccessible, several people "borrowed" a spouse (lived with a person who was already married). Women were the main victims of these situations, and they were generally without recourse. Brother Guillet reports the case of a father who took his daughter back in because she had been brutalized by her husband.[35] We also found some cases of *ménage à trois* where wives had to accept the presence of another woman under their own roof and even welcome the children of that union. It seems that Métis society was more open than European society and more ready to accept such "irregularities." Children were never rejected. They became integrated into the single mother's family or "adopted" by a relative. There were also cases where, following separation, a spouse went back home with his or her "natural" children.

Family homes were generally small,[36] consisting usually of a ground floor with an attic plus, sometimes, a summer kitchen or other attached building, and this did not favour intimacy. In spite of a lifestyle centred on the community rather than on the individual, crowding was the source of family tensions. In certain large families or those including several generations, it often happened that the father or older children "started to detest the cabin" [translation][37] and stayed away from home for long periods to work outside. Such a move, which was more open to men, sometimes served as a safety valve for an intolerable domestic situation.[38]

Housing

The oral and written testimony on Métis housing between 1875 and 1910 shows that there were three types of dwellings. The spacious homes of Xavier Letendre, Salomon Venne and Emmanuel Champagne illustrate the first type. These were log buildings usually covered with boards and topped with a shingle roof. The Letendre house was built in two two-storey sections and measured about 32 by 44 feet, and the interior walls were wood-panelled or roughcast.[39] An average house consisting of one and a half storeys and measuring about 20 by 25 feet constituted the second type. The exterior walls were daubed with a clay mortar and plastered over with lime. The ground floor of this type of dwelling contained two rooms: a living room and a kitchen, while the attic contained a single room divided by curtains and sometimes a partition. When space was needed, an annex was added and connected with the main building by a corridor or winding staircase. "The houses were a series of rooms stuck together: they were built one after the other" [translation].[40] The homes of Jean Caron Sr. (lot 52, built about 1890), Joseph Pilon Sr. (lot 67, built about 1888) and Charles Laviolette (lot 20, St. Laurent, built about 1900) were examples of this second type of dwelling. Quite a few people lived in more modest homes of the third type measuring 15 by 20 feet and less. During the 1880s there were some thatched roofs,[41] but these were later replaced by spruce-shingle roofs, with thatched roofs being confined to stables, sheds and other outbuildings. The furniture in all types of dwellings was simple and homemade. Only the more well-to-do or those who were paid in cash (merchants, representatives and officials) were able to buy home decorations. Several Métis families who had emigrated from Manitoba before 1855 had brought along such valuables as a clock, sewing machine, spinning wheel, weaving loom, four-poster bed, wardrobe, dresser, carpet and even a silver teapot.[42] However, most of them lost these items as well as their dwellings during the battles of Fish Creek and Batoche. They needed about 10 or even 20 years to regain their former living standards.

Among the traditional (French Canadian or Amerindian) objects listed in the 1885 inventories, we might mention hooked rugs, quilts, violins, chests (trunks), belts, vests and "soft shoes" decorated with many-coloured pearls and embroidery, arrow sashes, tobacco pouches, and hunting knives with a chiselled handle and decorated with various animals. The inventories also mention religious articles, and in particular images of Christ and the Virgin, crucifixes, rosaries and prayer books.

Clothing

From the 1870s on, most of the traditional mid-19th-century clothes were displaced by "European" ones. Depending on place of residence, lifestyle and social status, this change took various forms. Some articles such as "oxhide shoes," "soft shoes," shawls (or "covers"), arrow sashes or animal-skin capes (made of "cat" [racoon] or other fur) were still worn by the old people at the turn of the century.

Louis Schmidt and Louis Goulet have left eyewitness accounts of the "outfits" worn by old Métis. According to Louis Schmidt:

> *The voyageur, artisan or whoever wore only pants, a shirt, soft shoes and some kind of cap, or a hat or tuque to cover their heads. Socks or stockings were unknown to them. In the winter, they stuffed a rabbit skin or piece of woollen material into their shoes and put on a cape of unlined woollen cloth to protect themselves against the cold. Generally, they wore a sash over the [hooded] cape, but many young people let their sash hang down in front and used it only to hold up their trousers. Nobody wore suspenders, except for young children. Women's outfits were just as simple. Only their modesty demanded a little more care. Thus they wore a small shawl or big kerchief [often made of silk] on their chests, plus another one on their heads for going out, as well as a shawl [on their shoulders]. By way of stockings, they wore a kind of gaiters: small woollen leggings trimmed with fringes. They wore the same kind of shoes as men.*[43] [Translation]

According to Goulet,[44] the Métis were proud and always well dressed, even though the winterers (the people in the hunting and trading camps of the North-West) did not dress the same way as the people of Red River, who dressed according to the latest Montréal or St. Paul fashions.

> *The winterers still wore soft shoes, plain closely woven cloth suits, the thick flannel shirts of the Hudson's Bay Company, arrow sashes and gaiters. In the winter, they wore their hooded*

> *capes of fine woollen cloth, their craint-rien (hard-wearing) capes and their old bonnets. A so-called craint-rien cape was a kind of short fur-lined overcoat.*[45] [Translation]

He added that shirts were usually made of grey flannel or brightly coloured cotton, while trousers were made of English cloth, most often navy blue, and sometimes of corduroy. Many winterers wore pants that opened on the hip, which were called *culotte à la bavaloise* (Bavarian breeches).[46] Like his compatriot Louis Schmidt, Goulet described women's costume as being more severe. Besides covering themselves in kerchiefs and shawls:

> *they wore a long dress skirt down to their feet and over it a kind of jerkin called a basque, with puffed-out sleeves between elbow and shoulder which tapered off to a point at ear level. The most common fabric was velvet.*[47] [Translation]

Several changes in dress were noted in Batoche between 1872 and about 1920. Photographs show that men dressed more in the European (or North American) manner: they often wore "the arrow sash of the old halfbreeds" [translation], but on Sundays the freighters-farmers and day labourers wore "French" shoes, which merchants, officials and other "office workers" wore every day. According to one witness, the cowboy costume became popular among young people, beginning in 1890. Several young Métis who raised cattle or hired themselves out to the ranchers wore "crimped breeches," a kind of pants tight-fitting on the thighs and legs and bell-shaped above the shoes. They also wore a tall hat with a very wide straight brim.[48]

According to the 1885 inventories of merchandise in Batoche stores and a later list of purchases at Mitchell's in Duck Lake, all the items needed for making clothes were available. Few people bought ready-made clothes, except perhaps for some well-to-do ones. Métis women were skilful with needle and thread and made clothes at home. One child's clothing served several brothers and sisters, and "we weren't difficult: we wore what we were given" [translation].[49] Among the fabrics for sale in the stores, there was printed calico (cotton), which came in yellow and red, in variously coloured squares (plaid) and in stripes. Batiste (cambric), fine cotton, wincey, flannel and cashmere, especially in black, blue and red, and ribbons, lace and assorted buttons were much in demand. Among ready-to-wear clothes, there were mainly duffle coats (cloth coats lined with flannelette), black capes, felt hats, kid gloves, leather boots and shoes and rubber overshoes. Women also bought hats, fine cotton stockings and jewellery such as earrings and brooches. Knitwear, especially scarves, tuques, bonnets and mittens, was made at home. The same was true of underwear except for the famous corset.

Around the turn of the century, women's usual costume consisted of a skirt, blouse and apron. Given the means, they would make themselves a fur coat, but more often it was made of cloth. Well-dressed men wore a top hat, cape and ankle boots for important outings. In short, while the traditional voyageur's or winterer's dress continued to exist in some form or other until the turn of the century, the Métis adopted more and more the costume of the period and differed less and less from the population of European origin.

Food

At the time of the winter camps and in the first colonies along the South Saskatchewan, the Métis subsisted almost entirely on "wild buffalo" (bison), as well as roots (vegetables) and wild fruits gathered while travelling or in camp. When "there was no cow [bison]" [translation], they hunted big game (caribou, mule deer, white-tail deer), duck or prairie fowl, or they went fishing.[50] Usually the only food they bought was flour, but on some occasions they also bought bacon, salt pork and tea. Flour was essential for preparing their flat round bread ("bannock"), another important staple in their diet. This unleavened bread was made of flour, water and fat, to which some added baking powder, and baked either directly over the embers (in the form of small cakes placed on sticks arranged around the fire) or in a big cast-iron pot which served them as an oven during their travels.[51] In their permanent homes, it was baked in a casserole on the stove or in the oven.

During the 1870s, the Métis still subsisted mainly on bison. They preferred fresh meat, especially tongue, hump, rump and the two sides (rib steaks between the shoulder and the haunch). The meat was cooked, smoked or dried, but most often transformed into *taureau* or pemmican. Louis Schmidt described the preparation of *taureau* as follows:

> *The lean parts are used to make what is called* taureau, *or what the English call "pemmikan," which is a corruption of the Cree word "pimihkan" (meaning a mixture containing fat) .... They spread a battering skin on the ground. They fashion a flail as for threshing wheat, and they beat the meat to reduce it almost*

> *to powder. It is then called* viande pillée *[pounded meat]. They then mix it with hot fat in big containers, and the* taureau *is ready. They put it in big well-sewn leather bags, and it is then ready to be shipped and sold.*[52] [Translation]

Dried or crushed fruit was often added to the meat.

Bison fat called *graisse de moëlle* [marrow fat] replaced butter and other fats in food preparation. When there was no meat, the Métis had recourse to fish, preferably broiled, for it seems that they hardly appreciated boiled fish, "that awful mush."[53] During the lean periods, they also ate barley soup and even wild cabbage soup.

In the permanent settlements the diet was more varied, and there were more traditional dishes. In Red River during the 1850s and 1860s, and later on in the St. Laurent Settlement in Saskatchewan, the dishes reflected the residents' French-Canadian and Amerindian origins. Meat was still the favourite dish, but there was now more variety. Following the disappearance of the bison, buffalo was replaced by so-called "wild" meat, including deer, bear, prairie chicken, pheasant and duck. The residents also ate jackrabbit and more rarely, especially on lean days, smoked fish (e.g. pike and sturgeon). Those who raised domestic animals butchered in the fall. They consumed pork made into blood pudding, sausages and head cheese, and in the winter they ate salt pork and beef (mainly minced and in stews). During the spring thaw the remaining meat was cut into strips and dried on wooden racks.[54] At the turn of the century, chicken or other fowl was stuffed and roasted in the oven on Sundays and on special occasions.[55] This dish was much appreciated, "a real feast," but relatively rare, as the less fortunate preferred to keep laying-hens. There were, in addition, various other foods, mostly of French-Canadian origin. Comparative studies (using documentary and oral sources) of traditional French-Canadian dishes and the Métis diet reveal many similarities between the two.

> **Tourtières or meat pies**: a preparation of minced meat covered with pastry dough.
>
> **Chopped beef or pork meatballs**: the meatballs were boiled in a browned-flour sauce or rolled in a batter and fried. These meatballs or *avrignoles*[56] were served as a main dish on holidays.

Cretons or courtons: very finely chopped pork meat, with fat (suet) added to it.

Among the most typical Métis dishes were the following:

Rababou:[57] a kind of fricassee of fowl, deer or beef.

Taureau or pemmican: a variant of the traditional dish, with beef or venison replacing bison meat. The meat was pounded, and fat and dried fruit (saskatoon berries, currants or grapes) were then added to it.[58]

Feuillet or fayet (omasum) and *panse* (paunch): the third and first stomachs of the bison or other ruminants, which were eaten boiled and seasoned.[59]

Flan: milk taken from the second milking of a cow which has just calved and then baked in the oven.[60]

Glissantes (dumplings): spoonfuls of dough boiled in chicken bouillon or other meat broth.

Poutine glissante (dumpling pudding): a thick pastry cut into squares and boiled in water and served with molasses or syrup. This pastry could be poured over compote of fresh or dried fruit and then baked in the oven. This treat was eaten with "a lot of good fresh cream."[61]

There is also mention of twisted or braided doughnuts, a kind of doughnut that is still made in Batoche and vicinity. A similar desert called croquignoles was eaten in Quebec at the end of the 19th century. According to one description,

> *people loved to try the croquignoles that the young girl of the house would make for Christmas and New Year's Day. While kneading the dough on the upturned cover of the dough trough, the girl, all covered with flour, would invariably offer those browning delicacies to the young lads ... so she did her best to make them turn golden brown as they twisted and turned capriciously in the foaming, boiling fat.*[62] [Translation]

At the turn of the century, people in Batoche and vicinity also ate *ferlouche* pie (a mixture of molasses and flour), *tire-liche* (a kind of stew made with slices of pork, onions, pumpkin or squash, and molasses) and "virgin soup" (a milk soup with white cabbage and eggs).

Gathering wild fruit was both an economic and a social activity. Families went out together and often used the occasion for a picnic and for camping out. Among other things, they gathered black and red wild cherries, currants, gooseberries, bunchberries and especially saskatoon berries and cranberries. Cherries were crushed between two rocks and dried. Some people made little rounds of dried fruit. "In the winter, they boiled them in water to make tarts and cakes or to eat them with cream" [translation].[63] They also gathered nuts and dogwood (kinik-kinik), which they smoked like tobacco.

Vegetable gardens were an important factor in nutrition. The Métis grew large amounts of potatoes, carrots, rutabagas, cabbage, turnips, parsnips, pumpkins, onions, beans, cucumbers and lettuce. Multi-coloured corn (Indian corn) was very popular. During the summer, fresh corn was roasted on a grill, and in the autumn it was dried and pounded into a powder or flour to add to soups and stews.[64] Corn flour, ground barley and oatmeal were also used for bannock and bread. The latter gradually replaced the former as a daily food, especially when dry yeast became available commercially in the early 1900s.

After the fall harvest, root vegetables were stored in a cellar in the basement of the main dwelling or outside.

> *The "roots" were put in outside or inside cellars. There was usually a trap door leading to the cellar underneath the kitchen or summer kitchen or lean-to floor. They also put straw in it.*[65] [Translation]

The roots were said to keep well in the cellar until July.[66] A Faithful Companion of Jesus from Prince Albert gave a detailed description of a big cellar built by a Métis:

> *It [the cellar] is indispensable here so as to preserve vegetables for winter use, for everything freezes in the ordinary house cellars. Our root-house was constructed, by a very experienced Métis, in the following manner. An excavation of eight feet by eight, and twelve feet deep was made on the side of a slope in the most sheltered part of our wood in front of the house. The*

> *excavation was entirely lined with boards and a slanting roof made of heavy blocks of wood covers the inside. The entrance has two doors, twelve feet distant from each other, a passage five or six feet deep separates them. It is covered with planks thus forming a kind of tunnel. This passage is filled with hay so that when the inside door is open the frost cannot get in. To complete the construction, the whole exterior is covered with manure to the depth of about three feet so that nothing can be seen except the outside door.*[67]

Meat preservation was also a problem in an era when there was no electricity and when canning techniques were not yet well known. There were many smoke shacks in the Batoche area. Beef, pork and game were smoked. Pork especially was salted (and eaten as "grilled salt pork"), but the Métis did not appreciate this dish as much as did the French Canadians. Besides salting, drying, smoking and freezing (in the winter), the current methods of conservation from 1910 on were cooling in a well and burying.

> *When people slaughtered an animal, they went from house to house and sold meat. Everybody had a well. Some attached a bucket to a cable and lowered the meat to the bottom of the well. This preserved the meat for about ten days. Others kept the meat all summer packed in sawdust, while others used wheat instead.*[68] [Translation]

The Métis also cultivated small fruit trees, including saskatoon berries and currants. Miss Dorval planted apple and cherry trees in the presbytery courtyard. The custom of planting bushes was fairly recent among the Métis: it went back at most to the time of their permanent settlement. Photographs of courtyards taken in the 1890s and later show only little landscaping. People had little time for flower gardens and lawns. The emphasis was on vegetable gardens, which were an important source of food and were often decorated with flower beds. Flowers and herbs (such as chives) were also grown near the house.

During the holidays and at weddings, Métis families prepared another series of special dishes. Those who had the means roasted a leg of beef or a choice piece of meat for meatballs. Desserts also acquired a special character. A cake called dessert fancy was described as:

> *The women boiled nice raisins (bought in the store for the occasion) with sugar and water to make a fairly thick syrup. They made a nice dough with flour, fat, sugar and milk. When the raisin syrup had cooled, it was poured into a dripping-pan. The raisins were covered with the dough. This was then put in the oven.*[69] [Translation]

According to the books of the Mitchell store in Duck Lake during the 1890s,[70] the more well-to-do families bought mainly brown sugar (less expensive than white sugar), flour, raisins, dried prunes, canned sardines and canned salmon, "fancy" soda biscuits, oatmeal, rice, Rogers' corn syrup, and maple-syrup bars (candy) from Quebec. During the holidays, they also bought candies and apples and, more rarely, oranges. Some spices, like cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves and red pepper, as well as salt and pepper were in common use. Cocoa (chocolate) was a fairly rare and expensive delicacy. People also bought baking powder, baking soda and washing soda in order to make soap.[71]

People drank large amounts of tea, homemade "coffee" such as barley coffee (roasted barley grains) and homemade wine called *piquette*. Father Moulin made rhubarb wine, and others made wine from various kinds of cherries. Whisky, another common product, was made from wheat and barley.

Milk and milk products were an important part of the diet. On several farms, there was a dairy "level with" the house, often near a well. The farm wife went there to take refuge and to work in peace. Mrs. Ti-Jean Caron (Virginie Parenteau) had a dairy of which she was particularly proud. According to her daughter-in-law:

> *The dairy was lined with boards and covered with a shingle roof. There was a door on the north side. It was whitewashed both inside and out. The dairy was very clean and frequently washed with lye to prevent odours. There were also shelves from one wall to the other and a big table in the middle, as well as milk containers and a cream jar.*[72] [Translation]

The fresh milk was taken there in buckets to be poured and separated from the cream. The family kept the milk and cream for themselves, but gave the sour or curdled milk to the calves. Several women tried to outdo one another with their butter-making skills.

> *To preserve butter in the winter, people filled small tubs, covering the butter with a white cloth topped with a good layer of coarse salt, and then poured some brine with an egg in it over and put back the cover, closing it very tightly. For everyday use, butter was made in small lumps, pressed into a mould and then placed on a big flat dish on the well.*[73] [Translation]

Festivals, Customs and Folklore

The hard work and the pain and misery were fortunately lightened by celebrations and by visits with parents and friends. People gathered and fraternized on the church steps after mass on Sundays and holidays, as well as after other religious ceremonies. When it came to going out, men and women were unequal, as they were in several other respects. According to one lady's testimony, "we girls went out little, and even on Sundays we had to be back home at six o'clock to milk our cows. The boys, though, did go out."[74]

Weddings were occasions for getting together and having a good time. Many people got married in the winter, between Epiphany (January 6) and Lent (mid-February), though at the turn of the century, more of them chose to get married in the spring or fall, preferably on a Tuesday or Wednesday and early in the morning. Weddings lasted two days and sometimes longer.

> *In the home of Martin Lavallée, the greatest fun-lover of them all, I have seen weddings start on Tuesday and finish only on Saturday, with time off on Friday.*[75] [Translation]

The suitor in his Sunday best had to formally ask his beloved's father for her hand. The engagement was short, and before the wedding, the marriage banns were published three times (on three successive Sundays) at the local church. On the wedding day, the religious ceremony was sometimes followed by a buggy ride that took the newlyweds all over the parish. Then came the festivities: a plentiful meal and dancing until late at night, as well as on the following days, with different relatives taking their turn as hosts.

Spending an evening in company at one home or another was another way to have a good time. "During the winter we often danced every night."[76] According to witnesses, each parish had its own social evenings, and people from other parishes were not usually invited. At these evenings, young people sang and danced, while old folks sat and talked, told stories or tapped their feet and clapped their hands to the rhythm of the music. Men often took advantage to have a little drink, which women never did. They rarely got drunk, though, perhaps because of the presence of women as well as their relatives.

The Métis loved to have a good time and to take a little drink, and it was standard practice for them to be generous and hospitable. There could be no social evening without musical instruments: violins, accordions, mouth organs (harmonicas), drums, guitars, bombardons (Jew's harps), as well as such percussion instruments as spoons, plates and bowls made of wood or tin, etc. They danced reels, jigs, step dances, cotillons, quadrilles (square dances), *châtises* and even minuets, especially the older people. These dances were called "two-step," "seven-step," *châtise*, "drops of brandy" (*danse du crochet*), "reel o'cats," "eight-hand reel" (*reel à huit*), "handkerchief dance" (*danse aux mouchoirs*), "pair of fours" and "rabbit dance" (*danse du lièvre*), the last one accompanied by little cries.[77] There was almost always a "caller" who indicated the figures the dancers were to execute. "Formerly, it was customary to remove the bride's moccasin at the wedding" [translation]. The groom then had to look for it.[78] Men especially liked to "jig." St. Louis was famous for its singers (both male and female), while Batoche was known for its dancers (of either sex). But in general, "everybody sang or played some musical instrument" [translation]. The most outstanding singers were Charles-Eugène and Frédéric Boucher, Patrice Parenteau and Charles Nolin. The holiday season (from Christmas to Epiphany) opened with a series of "balls by oil light" (*bals à l'huile*).[79] According to an 1889 account in a Prince Albert newspaper, "At Batoche, during the holidays, balls are the order of the day. Two were held last night, one at Pilon's and the other at D[aniel] Charette's and youngsters had all the chances they wanted of shaking themselves up."[80]

We have collected several traditional song titles. Some of these songs are known in their entirety, others have survived only in part, and still others have come down to us in other forms.[81] The "Chanson de Louis Riel," composed by him on the occasion of his sister Henriette's marriage in 1883, was known to the older people, and interestingly enough, the version widely known in Saskatchewan differs from the Manitoba one. The popular repertoire included: "Deux p'tits oiseaux avec le bec pointu" (P. Parenteau), "J'ai fait une maîtresse" (R. St-Germain), "Courtisan malheureux ou Riche marchand malheureux" (A. Ferguson), "Le matin quand je me lève" (A. Ferguson), "Une chanson du temps des élections" and "Buvons mes chers amis" (composed by C.-E. and F. Boucher), "Sur le coup de ma bouteille" and "Du temps ou j'allais voir les filles."[82] There were also religious hymns: "J'irai la voir un jour" (A. Fleury-Nicolas) and "Le voici l'agneau si doux" (A. Pilon-Ranger). People sang in Cree, French and the Métis dialect (Métchif). The tunes were often those of old French-Canadian songs or Amerindian refrains.[83]

Those who did not dance or sing were able to play cards: *quatre-sept* and euchre (called *à l'écarté*) were said to be popular games.[84] People sometimes played dice (poker) for money, much to the displeasure of the priest. Men were very fond of billiards. There were four billiards tables in Batoche in 1885: in the homes of Georges Fisher, Jean-Baptiste Boyer, Gabriel Dumont and Joseph Vandal. However, billiards was prohibited on Sundays on pain of a fine.[85] Among the games were target shooting, "Recule-toi de là," "Madame demande sa toilette," "Trois pas d'amour" and "On fait son testament."[86]

The Métis observed some religious and civil holidays in their own distinctive ways. Several of those traditions disappeared only about 20 years ago. At the turn of the century, Christmas had a purely religious character, the real festivities being reserved for New Year's Day: "on Christmas Eve, we went to midnight mass, and when we got home, we ate a little, drank some tea and went to bed. The presents were for New Year's Day" [translation].[87] One witness added: "we did not have Christmas gifts, only candies, apples and pastry" [translation].[88] Some families, like those of Jean Caron Sr. and Barthélémi Pilon, had a party (*réveillon*) after the midnight mass, but it seems that this custom was more French Canadian than Métis. The New Year's Day tradition included paternal blessings, hugging and kissing all around, and passing around a little gin, whisky or homemade wine, accompanied by delicacies and all sorts of pâtés. The atmosphere was festive, for "woe to those who weep on New Year's Day: their eyes will still be red on Christmas Day" [translation].[89] On New Year's Eve, children hung their stockings from the foot of their bed, and the following morning they found them stuffed with little treats, according to their parents' means.[90] Father Fourmond had this to say about paternal blessings in 1878:

> *These good people have a very touching custom: as soon as they come in, they kneel down before their priest and ask him for his blessing. Similarly, when they get up on the morning of that day, children customarily ask their father to bless them.*[91] [Translation]

Louis Schmidt, a Métis nationalist and fervent Catholic, blessed his children by reciting the following prayer:

> *Blood of my blood, sons (daughters) of my race,*
> *Who are today gathered under my roof,*
> *Follow in the footsteps of your ancestors,*
> *Remain obedient to the faith,*
> *Preserve the customs*
> *Left you by your ancestors,*
> *And above all, keep your language.*[92] [Translation]

New Year's Day was spent with one's family, and the noon meal was taken at the grandparents' home.

In the 19th century, the Métis communities gave some of their holidays a religious character. Thus their "national day" became St. Joseph's Day: inaugurated in 1884, it grew in popularity during the 1880s and 1890s. A citizens' committee was responsible for organizing the festivities. Xavier Letendre presided over the committee between 1888 and 1890 and was succeeded by Moïse Ouellette. The day commenced with a mass, during which the banner of the St. Joseph Society was displayed. This was followed by a country fair with sports events, music, dance and camp fires, as well as a crafts competition and sale. The fair was held in Batoche at a place described as a pretty or beautiful prairie. During the first few years, the organizers chose an open piece of land near the river, south of Emmanuel Champagne's (lot 45) and north-east of the village, but later on, they preferred a piece of land east of the village, uphill from lot 45.

The celebrations brought together all the Métis from the surroundings. An account in a newspaper from the area describes the 1889 activities:

> *The French Halfbreeds yesterday celebrated the 24th of July, St. Joseph's Day. Parties were arriving all day from all parts of the country. Sports commenced about noon, commencing with horse racing, pony races: trotting races and slow races. There were tugs of war, foot races and other games.*[93]

At the turn of the century, the Batoche celebrations still started with a mass in church,[94] but for one of our witnesses,

> *one of the biggest attractions was killing an ox in the field, the way they used to kill buffaloes. They shot arrows and drew knives. They made a big fire. The ox was prepared on the spot and roasted on the embers. Everybody ate of it. Everyone got a piece for nothing. It was a real feast.*[95] [Translation]

"Old" Moïse Ouellette donated the animal.[96]

The picnic was accompanied by buggy races, children's games, raffles, as well as an arm-wrestling competition and firearm shooting for the men. The women exhibited their needle or crochet work, lace, embroidery, quilts, hooked rugs and arrow sashes — traditional crafts of French-Canadian origin. Some also worked in leather in Amerindian fashion: moccasins (soft leather shoes), Indian boots (harder red leather), and embroidered or decorated or pearl-studded vests and belts. Others tended the tables where oranges, candies, cold drinks and pastries were sold.

Duck Lake also held a country fair in July, though it was a multicultural one. As for its October farm show, it attracted Métis, French Canadians, French and English. Prizes were given out for the best products in the following categories: horses, cattle, milk products, threshed grain, vegetables, smoked meat, jam, leather (deerskin, moccasins, fur-lined gloves, coats), oil paintings, water colours, and charcoal or pencil drawings, and there were also prizes for "ladies' work," which included embroidered shirts and pillow cases, pin cushions, knitted quilts, cushions and slippers.[97]

The Métis holiday kept its originality, its French Métis spirit and its social traditions until the 1930s. According to some witnesses, after that it became "a drunken brawl" [translation],[98] and increasing participation by Amerindians changed its specifically Métis character.

The pilgrimage from Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes to St-Laurent-de-Grandin was another important celebration in Métis life. This annual event, which must have started about 1884, was formally consecrated in 1906.[99] Brother Célestin Guillet repaired Brother Piquet's ancient grotto and built a chapel. To the small statue of the Virgin of Lourdes given by Charles Nolin in 1885 in gratitude for the recovery of his wife Rosalie Lépine was added another bigger statue, gift of a benefactress from abroad. The pilgrimage of 16 July 1906 was especially moving. It testified to the faith of the pilgrims and their hope of seeing their physical and moral sufferings healed or alleviated. A pilgrim gave the following report of the day's ceremonies:

> *From the previous day on, many pilgrims arrived in St. Laurent .... The following day, starting before dawn, a long line of carriages crisscrossed the fields to get there ... around 10 o'clock when the solemn mass would be celebrated ... there were a dozen oblate and secular priests, prostrate before the small chapel. There were more than 600 pilgrims gathered near the grotto ... singers from different parishes formed a choir and with genuine enthusiasm performed Dumont's beautiful royal mass .... In the afternoon, all the pilgrims were back near the grotto and getting ready to go in procession to the old mission cemetery .... After the benediction of the Holy Sacrament ... this beautiful day ended with the consecration to the Holy Virgin, followed by the singing of the beautiful hymn, "J'irai la voir un jour."*[100] [Translation]

The Métis attended these ceremonies in great numbers and were profoundly impressed by them. One of them, who had been suffering from a hernia, declared that he was miraculously cured.

> *When he got back from the altar, the good Métis felt better, and the swelling which a few moments before had impeded his walking had disappeared, so he stood there and dissolved into tears of joy, and after the mass he told us: "I don't feel my ailment any more, I now walk without pain, and I feel like I can work like a young man of twenty."*[101] [Translation]

Another Métis pilgrim exclaimed: "How good it feels to pray here" [translation].[102]

Among the other customs and beliefs, there were the tales and dreams, often of a religious nature, but also pervaded by other influences. "Old wives" especially told tales about old times, "horror stories," ghost stories and "prophesies" (stories predicting a misfortune, death, etc.). Death was the main theme of several of these stories. One lady said that after her father's death her mother told her that she could never go to bed without reciting the prayers she had promised him. When she forgot (which did not happen very often), she felt someone pulling at the covers of her bed.[103] Another lady testified that she had had a premonition of her husband's death: "the flesh below my eyes twitched for three weeks" [translation].[104] She added that her father had been forewarned of the death of her mother.

> *He was travelling on a train to Winnipeg when he felt a cold hand on his face. He knew then that things were not going well at home. My mother was already dead. My brother had gone to get him, and when they came back, she was lying on the floor.*[105] [Translation]

The sick were traditionally treated with herb teas and dressings. Among the aromatic and medicinal plants, there was white elder, sarsaparilla, chicory, couch grass, and "larch" (red spruce or tamarack). The Métis also prepared purgative infusions of pine gum. It was mainly the women who cultivated herbs and gathered them in the woods. On longer or more extensive gathering trips, the whole family went along.

The seneca root, also known as "snakeroot," was a plant the Métis gathered for their own use or for sale. It was used in the preparation of remedies for pneumonia, whooping cough, croup, rheumatism, and respiratory and digestive disorders. Some healers also practiced "Indian medicine," a therapy based on prayer and suggestion.[106] For the treatment of a fracture, they saw a bonesetter rather than a physician. In fact, "people sent for the doctor only when there was great danger and rarely went to the hospital, or only to die" [translation].[107] At the time of death, they always sent for the priest, dominated as they were by the religious tradition, distrust and fear of physicians, and a certain fatalism. Moreover, the account books show that they regularly bought such homemade or commercial medicines as St. Jacob's oil, Mother Sygel's pills, "painkiller," vitriol, "electric oil," "pain destroyers," smelling salts, peppermints, castor oil and spruce seeds.[108]

The Métis smoked a mixture of chopped dogwood bark called "kinik-kinik" and commercial tobacco called "plugs."[109] The kinik-kinik was kept in a deerskin pouch. Women, especially old ones, were still smoking around the turn of the century, a practice inherited from Amerindian women. According to Father Fourmond (1878),

> *This odd habit of smoking has spread even to old women. I have often felt sorry that I am not a photographer, so I could send you a picture of our old cook sitting gravely in the midst of her pots and pans and inhaling long draughts of smoke from her peace pipe.*[110] [Translation]

A meal always ended in a smoking session. As the missionary wrote, "Without the pipe, nothing is possible: no good dinner, no conversation, no business" [translation].[111]

Speech, Names and Nicknames

Cree, French, and a dialect consisting of a mixture of the two were the languages commonly used in Batoche and vicinity. Some people also spoke Saulteaux. The local dialect, called "Métchif," is a kind of French full of vivid imagery, coloured by several Amerindian expressions, and with its own style and syntax.[112] We only need to read the memoirs of Louis Schmidt and Louis Goulet to be struck by its originality. It is a spoken language. As examples, we have chosen a few expressions collected during our conversations in the area:

- *Savez-vous tu* (do you know that ...)
- *Que viens-tu cri* (what are you looking for)
- *Agreillez-vous* (get ready)
- *Nous nous sommes fait galvander* (we let them pursue us)
- *On les mouchera* (they will be destroyed — said within the context of the Battle of Batoche in 1885)
- *Ça dit ça* (that's what they say)
- *Faire apala* (to have a meal along a prairie trail)
- *Aller rôder* (to go visiting)
- *Garnir les besaces de cartouches* (to fill the bag with bullets, in speaking of a bag with two pockets)
- *Être trop au blanc* (to be too few soldiers)
- *Coucher quelqu'un ou un animal* (to kill a person or animal)
- *Aller aux graines* (to go and gather wild fruit such as the little wild pear)
- *Camper* (to sleep outside while on the road or to stop to make tea)
- *Piller* (to steel)
- *Jongler* (to think)
- *Wow Boy* (stop!)
- *Un terrain en déclivité* (a sloping piece of land)
- *Une corvée* (a piece of work)
- *Une musique* (a musical instrument such as a harmonium or harmonica)
- *Des mèches* (matches)
- *Une échore* (apparently a stall or small store, usually in the form of a lean-to)
- *Un rababou* (a stew, as well as something useless and ineffective, as for example in speaking of Gatling gun in 1885: "the *rababou* which made a lot of noise and did little" [translation]).

French was taught in school, and English was also gradually introduced, but since most children only stayed in school a few years, neither of these languages was spoken or written fluently. In the 19th century, Cree was not taught and had no official standing. Yet in spite of everything, some families spoke more Cree than French, especially the more isolated ones or the ones least "integrated" into the Eurocanadian context, a fact deplored by Father Moulin.[113] In the 1890s and 1900s, families travelling outside the district came in contact with English. Several inhabitants of the Batoche area had relatives in North Dakota, Montana and southwestern Alberta (a district before 1905), where English was more widely spoken. However, French remained the dominant language in the area. At the turn of the century, the Métis were very much attached to it. According to Louis Schmidt's grandson, "My grandfather had been raised in French. So I can assure you that we had to speak it correctly" [translation].[114] Louis Schmidt was very active in French-language societies in Saskatchewan and passed on his values to his children, whom he educated in French. Letters and testimony from the 1880s to the 1920s give further evidence of the Francophone atmosphere and mentality of the area. But like other Francophone minorities (the French Canadians and the French), the Métis were at a disadvantage in a society and an economy where English came first. In order to escape discrimination or to identify with the majority, several Métis gradually opted for English. According to a former teacher, there was another reason why they gradually abandoned French:

> *At that time, [the 1920s and 1930s], they had no objection at all to learning French, but had not yet spent much time outside St. Laurent and Batoche. They did not know that they had a jargon of their own. Once they became aware that they did not speak French like the others [the French and the French Canadians], that they had many peculiar expressions, they decided to take up English. Nowadays, they speak more English than French.*[115] [Translation]

Seasonal migration and lack of opportunity did not encourage education beyond primary school. After Miss Dorval's departure in 1914,[116] Batoche, St. Laurent and the other small country schools in the vicinity had difficulty recruiting French-language teachers. Duck Lake and St. Louis had the advantage of harbouring religious teaching communities. It is interesting to note that the first generation of Batoche women (who had been born in Red River and had had the advantage of attending Grey Nuns' schools in St. Boniface, St. Norbert or St. François-Xavier) were better educated than the generation of those born in Saskatchewan in the late 1870s and the 1880s. On the other hand, women were generally better educated than men. According to a descendant of Marie (Pagé) Montour, "grandmother Montour [was] well educated: she knew French and Latin" [translation].[117] In subsequent generations, the level of education and the value attached to it seemed to vary with the social and economic status of the families. For example, Xavier Letendre's boys and two of his girls went to a college or convent outside the area. His son Jean (John) was a teacher in Fish Creek during the 1890s. Salomon Venne's family included one musician (Elmire) and a lawyer (David). Octave Régnier was a teacher in St. Louis during the 1890s, and Louis Marion and Ferdinand Ladret were farming instructors on the Kàpeyakwàskonam (One Arrow) and Kàmiyistowesit (Beardy) reserves. Some families in which the first generation of parents had little schooling but which enjoyed a degree of social prestige and a great deal of ambition guided their children towards politics, the Church or business. This was the case in the Boucher family in St. Louis and the Fisher family in Duck Lake and Batoche.

The use of nicknames was a widespread custom among the Métis. This tradition seems to have had French-Canadian and Amerindian antecedents. According to a Quebec ethno-historian, during the 17th and 18th centuries, Quebec farmers "blazoned" people and animals.[118] A nickname was indicative of a person's way of walking, faults, qualities, physical appearance, and social and economic condition. This was an ancient custom which had its origins in France, particularly Normandy. According to a 19th-century survey:

> *In our ancient language, to blazon means to say both good things and bad things, to praise and to curse; but the popular blazon finds its inspiration more in satire than in eulogy. It is the counterpart of the knightly blazon. The popular blazon embraces all the vernacular expressions sanctioned by usage to describe an individual, group or people.*[119] [Translation]

Marius Barbeau, an early 20th-century Canadian ethnologist, states that popular genealogical and geographical blazons arise spontaneously.

> *They have significance. Le Corbeau [the Crow] is generally dark-skinned .... They also reveal historical facts and observations about local mores and characteristics. Animals are often*

> *named after the colour of their skin or after their physical deformities and, it seems, sometimes also in order to ridicule a neighbour.*[120] [Translation]

Among the Métis population, there were several examples of nicknames attached to first or family names.[121] The exact meaning is not always very clear and may be subject to several interpretations. As a general rule, "le vieux" or "la vieille" indicated an old man or woman. Spouses addressed each other affectionately by the terms "son vieux" and "sa vieille." Some nicknames such as "Bonhomme" or "L'Homme," "Garçon," "Ti-Père," "La Fille" and "Fillette" seemed to have no special significance and were applied to various people. Other nicknames were of Cree origin: "Mosóm" (grandfather), "Kokúm" (grandmother), "Wabash" (the blond one), "Catchou" (the dark-skinned one), "Sisíp" (duck) and Pezzan (little squirrel). Several were of uncertain origin and were probably derived from the popular language, as for example "Dodet," "Châlins," "Bidou" and "Cotit." Other expressions such as Ti-Jean-Vieux-Jean (Caron), Louis-Louison (Letendre), Pascal-Pasquette (Fleury), Baptiste-Baptisense (Parenteau), Pierre-Pierriche (Parenteau) distinguished between father and son, or in the case of the Parenteau clan for example, between two large families: Pierre Parenteau (ca. 1818-1910) and Pierriche Parenteau (ca. 1814-93).

Some nicknames were very picturesque: "Beau-Blé" Laverdure, "Trois-Pouces" Carrière and "Brillant" (André) Sansregret, while others were not very flattering: "Ti-Laid" Parenteau, "La Pioche" Vandal and "Cincennes" Ledoux. Women seemed to have fewer nicknames. There was "La Boiteuse" (Henriette née Letendre), "La Pie" (Alvina née Boucher), "La Bichonne" (Justine née Branconnier and "La Fille" (Emma Ferguson). Others were more common derivatives: Caroline "Câline" Dumont (née Montour), Marguerite "Gigitte" Caron (née Dumas) and Rose "La Rose" Boucher (née Ouellette).

The custom of attaching a nickname to the family name was followed in provincial France and subsequently in New France and in French Canada (especially Quebec) till about the end of the 19th century. This was a way of distinguishing different branches of the same family. Subsequently, some branches adopted the nickname, while others kept the original name. In the course of time, these names also underwent changes, especially in pronunciation. Among the family names and nicknames recorded in Batoche and vicinity were the following (with the adopted name in italics): Letendre dit *Batoche* (from *batêche* or *baptême* or *bateau*?), Bérard dit *Lépine*, McGillis known as *Giroux*, Beaubrillant known as *Sansregret*.

Some names of English or Scottish origin were either gallicized or had another version in common language: Ferguson (Fercusson), Fidler (Fideleur), Bruce (Brousse), Fisher (Fischer), Tanner (Malaterre) and Henry (Hennerie).

PROBLEMS AND CONFLICTS

The use of alcohol (or "drink") was perceived as a general problem in the North-West by both the Mounted Police and the Church. There is no evidence, except in the case of a few individuals, that the Métis had a particularly high rate of alcohol consumption. In fact, when the West was first colonized, the missionaries remarked that Eurocanadians set a bad example to the natives of the country: the French Canadians, the French and even the English liked to have "a little drink." In French-Canadian society, drinking was part of the mores and accepted when done in moderation. By way of contrast, Canadians of English and Protestant origin tended to preach prohibition. On the other hand, certain immigrant groups who consumed no alcohol (e.g., the Mennonites) saw it as a sign of degeneracy and tended to regard the Métis as "a gang of drinkers and idlers" [translation].[122]

According to thinking current in the 19th century and thereafter, Eurocanadians regarded the Métis as having a propensity to drink. Recent studies have treated this problem and the proportionately higher incidence of drunkenness among natives as part of the reaction of an oppressed people in a period of social and economic change.[123]

During the 1870s and 1880s, there were no regulations governing either the production or sale of alcohol in the Territories, except for Amerindians living on reserves. The first ordinance establishing a system of sale by permit was issued in 1888,[124] but these regulations did not discourage either domestic production or excessive consumption. Like most other population centres, Batoche and vicinity had its share of homebrewers and bootleggers. The 1915 prohibition officially "closed the drinking places," but it, too, failed to put an end to clandestine production.[125] Among those who had a licence to sell in Batoche during the 1890s and 1900s were Xavier Letendre, Georges Fisher, Auguste Lenglet and the Venne brothers (Napoléon and David). Among the so-called bootleggers were reportedly Philippe Garnot, E. Lemieux and a

Fidler from the Fish Creek area. Garnot and Lemieux were French Canadians and not Métis. According to an 1891 report by policemen Lasker,

> *[t]here are suspicions that Philippe Garnot is brewing some kind of beer from barley ... also one E. Lemieux in the vicinity of Fish Creek has rented a small house some six miles from here where he lived all alone since last fall. He is doing nothing and owns only a small pony. I cannot see any of his means of existence .... He got [sic] a two gallon permit, early last fall but could not get any. He has the reputation of a whiskey smuggler and dealer.*[126]

Corporal Lasker added that the Venne brothers sold drink in excess of the quotas allocated to them.

Alcohol abuse turns up frequently in the files of the North-West Mounted Police, but those responsible were strangers, especially land speculators, who made the Métis drink only to exploit them more easily. "We were checking liquor permits here [Batoche]. All quiet except Land Speculators giving liquor to the Métis."[127] Political meetings and the Métis holiday are mentioned as two occasions for drunkenness and fighting. However, the organizers of the national day tried to control the use of alcohol. In 1890, the committee president Xavier Letendre supported the Mounted Police in this respect, and Inspector Huot reported:

> *I gave instructions that no kind of beer was to be allowed on the ground while the sports were going on. Mr. Batoche who has a license for selling 4 percent beer consented to this.*[128]

In 1892, the fair was held on the west bank because the fair ground on the other bank was too close to the village hotel.[129]

It is also obvious that there were many prejudices on the subject of alcohol use by native groups. Inspector Huot stated: "as in my opinion an Indian or a Half-Breed will get drunk even on strong tea. I also prevented the sale of hop beer."[130] Father Moulin said "that they run as if on fire as soon as they see that there is some" [translation].[131] The 24 July 1889 celebrations led to a fight which made the headlines in a Prince Albert newspaper. Charles Nolin, drunk, attacked a policeman, and Jean-Baptiste Parenteau took on Xavier Letendre. According to the report:

> *The French Halfbreeds yesterday celebrated 24th July, St. Joseph's Day. Parties were arriving all day from all parts of the country. Sports commenced ... races and other games but they were delayed by a furious pugilistic encounter, which resulted in the arrest of Charles Nolin our future member. It appears Nolin was on the committee for sports, but owing to the amount of beer and ginger ale indulged in, the gentleman was more capable of raising a rebellion than looking after the sports. The police were there, however, to do their duty, which Nolin resented. He was told to be quiet or go away, but instead of doing so he started to fight the police and abuse them, but he got badly left: they were too many for him. The darbies were put on his wrists and he was given a free ride to police barracks .... There was one more arrest. Jean-Baptiste Parenteau, for assaulting and striking Mr. Batoche on the nose .... He also tore one of Mr. Batoche's sleeves off ....*[132]

It seems that alcohol abuse was connected with the steadily deteriorating situation of the Métis. After 1885, more and more cases of drunkenness were reported in Batoche and vicinity. The same tendency appeared also among the clergy, but for different reasons.[133] Several witnesses suggested that the social and economic situation of the Métis was especially difficult during those years. Drink provided an escape from the sad reality of a "conquered" people, a dislocated economy and a society forced to withdraw into itself. The case of Xavier Letendre, who drank more and more, is particularly revealing.[134] Letendre enjoyed much prestige both inside and outside the community. He did well in business. But he also suffered many hardships: the premature deaths of several of his children and the social failure of some of his sons. The problem was even worse for the first generation born in Saskatchewan during the 1870s and 1880s, who reached adulthood during the first decade following the rebellion: they were even more disoriented and reacted more strongly than the preceding generation. Take the case of John (Jean) Letendre, son of Xavier, born in 1876, who studied at St. Boniface College and worked for some time as a teacher. He went nonetheless through a critical period around 1895-1910, and there are several references to his drinking bouts in the documents of the period. According to the testimony of a person who was "in Miss Dorval's school in Batoche" (around 1910), Miss Dorval approached John as he was lying in front of the presbytery. The following account provides a glimpse of the young man's exasperation and even deep despair:

> *John Letendre was drunk, "dressed like a dog," lying in front of the presbytery. Miss Dorval [the teacher] found him there. She stood next to him and said: "What do you think, John?" she said, "Drinking like that, how do you find the time to live? And when your time comes, how are you going to die? You drink so much!" John replied: "Those who can survive will, Miss Dorval. As for me, I don't give a damn!"*[135] [Translation]

Subsequently, John left the area to settle at Battleford where he was successful at raising cattle, as his deceased father and his brothers-in-law had been.

During the following years, alcohol continued to ravage the community. When drinking places were closed during the 1920s, drinkers got together secretly, either at a private home in the village, a place Father Myre had nicknamed "Sodom," or south along the trail leading to Gabriel's Crossing, a site the Métis called "Devil's Lake."[136]

Disease was another problem which at that time affected society in general, but had even more damaging effects on the Métis community. Several studies have shown that disease was one of the disastrous consequences of contacts between Europeans and Amerindians. While the Métis were better immunized than Amerindians against European diseases because of their heredity, they too, fell victim to them, though to a lesser degree. Most Métis in the North-West escaped the smallpox epidemic which decimated the Amerindian population in 1870. At the time, many Métis from Red River were on their way to the St. Albert colony and the winter camps. According to a nun from St. Albert:

> *If we had not been so afraid because of smallpox, we would have received 300 Métis families from Red River who were coming here, but the fear of disease stopped them on the way. They are spending the winter a few miles from Fort Carlton near the Gros Ventres River. In spite of the precautions the families took against the disease, this did not prevent it from getting there, for we were told recently that several of these people had caught smallpox in their camps ....*[137] [Translation]

In fact, the St. Laurent and Carlton registers show that there were only about 20 victims of the epidemic in the Petite Ville and Carlton winter camps. But the Lake St. Anne colony to the northwest and the Wood Mountain colony to the southwest were more seriously affected.[138]

The population of Batoche and vicinity was also decimated by the diseases current at the time. During the 1870s and 1880s, there were a number of deaths due to the "flu" (influenza), diphtheria, appendicitis, "tumours" (cancer) and "consumption" (tuberculosis). Several women died in childbirth or as a result of it, while men died of work-related or hunting accidents, overwork (hernias), and heart attacks and lung diseases. Young children were victims of suffocation, intestinal and respiratory diseases, diphtheria, whooping cough, and hereditary diseases such as tuberculosis. According to the testimony we gathered, "the flus were pretty nasty [around the turn of the century], but people never went to see the doctor. They made infusions and mustard poultices" [translation].[139] As for women, "they died young, many between 20 and 30, often without medical care; they died as martyrs" [translation].[140] They were especially prone to haemorrhages during childbirth, and certain midwives left a lot to be desired as far as hygiene was concerned.

The "flu" epidemics occurred in 1889-92, 1900-01 and 1903. The disease took various forms and struck families and especially young people. According to a 1903 witness:

> *... death of young Baptiste Deschamps's child, his first and only one, at about 1 o'clock in the afternoon. The disease reigns in almost every house. It's a kind of complicated flu.*[141] [Translation]

But the main cause of death at the turn of the century and for several decades afterwards was, without a doubt, pulmonary tuberculosis, commonly called "consumption" or "inflammation of the lungs." The parish registers, family histories and accounts of the period testify to the large number of cases of this disease. According to recent investigations into the causes and characteristics of tuberculosis, it is a social as well as a physiological phenomenon. Even though it is present in all groups, it would seem that its main victims are native peoples and blacks, who are usually most disadvantaged economically.[142] The disease has social and economic antecedents such as anxiety, tension, fatigue, overwork, lack of cleanliness, as well as bad diet and poor housing. These unfavourable living conditions were very widespread in the 19th century, and they were also to be found in the Métis population, particularly in this difficult transitional period. Tuberculosis generally affected several members of the same family. At the turn of the century, little was known about this disease, which was often identified as the flu, emphysema, an "inflammation" of the lungs or "red blotches," especially in its early stages. The first stage of tuberculosis might last several years, or worse, the affected person might escape the more obvious and deadly stages of the disease and yet remain contagious. The disease struck especially young people (15-35) and old men.[143] At first, tuberculosis patients were not isolated, which helped to spread the disease more rapidly, even though it is not necessarily contagious in a healthy environment. There was no effective treatment of tuberculosis prior to 1945. By that time, entire generations had been affected by it. Several Batoche families still felt its disastrous consequences during the fifties or were still predisposed to the disease. Buggy or wagon accidents, frozen limbs in winter and everyday mishaps also caused much loss of life.

Criminal offences for their part are causes or reflections of certain social conflicts or problems. But the crimes committed in the area, at least those we know about, were relatively minor. There were cases of fathers deserting their families, cases of drunkenness, irresponsibility, vagrancy, assault, theft, fraud, perjury and even madness, which was considered a dangerous and reprehensible condition at the time. Deserting one's family may have been a way to escape an untenable domestic situation. It may also have been that because of financial difficulties some men left home to look for work elsewhere, hoping to rejoin their families if their situations improved. An example was Joseph Parenteau, who left his wife Julie Ross and their two children in 1898. His father-in-law John Ross filed a complaint with the North-West Mounted Police in Duck Lake. Officer Hopper sent an account of the incident to the commanding officer in Prince Albert:

> *John Ross, a halfbreed farmer living about six miles southeast of Duck Lake complained that his son in law Joseph Parenteau had left his wife and two young children without support and had gone to Medicine Hat. Ross said that Parenteau was a drunken dissolute character and had sold a waggon, a mare and five head of cattle which he (Ross) had given him. Parenteau went out on last Monday's train and is supposed to have gone to Medicine Hat. He told some people he intended to stay away three years. Parenteau's wife and two children are staying with Ross. Ross wants the husband to do something to support his wife and family as they have no means whatever. Parenteau left here without the knowledge of his wife or her relations.*[144]

Parenteau's version is not known, and neither is the outcome. But this was not the only incident of the kind. William Bruce's family in St. Louis was in a similar situation. His wife Marie stated: "I am or was his wife. In 1895, he left me and family and joined the police and went off to the Klondyke [sic] and for eight years he has sent me no support ... deserted me."[145] In 1900 he sent her $10 through a friend from St. Louis who was returning from the Klondike. Mr. Bruce never returned home, and his wife died in 1914. However, her sons François and John came to the aid of their mother and their young brothers and sisters. There was also the case of Clémentine Lévesque who was deserted by her husband. She stated that he had lost his mind.[146] However, Mrs. Lévesque was luckier than most women in her situation: being a teacher, she was able to live by her own means.

Among the other court cases involving residents of the area (Batoche, Duck Lake, St. Louis) and heard in Prince Albert, there was that of Moïse Charette of Duck Lake who was charged with perjury. Charette had testified against Garnot at the Garnot vs. Malfaire trial.[147] The dispute was about a contract between the two about cutting and transporting forage. In 1895, Ambroise Richard appeared before the justice of the peace in Duck Lake for stealing wine from the St-Louis-de-Langevin mission.[148] He was sentenced to two months of forced labour in the Prince Albert prison. The following year, a resident of St. Laurent was charged with defrauding the government of the Territories in connection with a $700 road construction contract.[149]

The charge of madness brought against Jean-Baptiste Rocheleau senior in 1888 is particularly sad and evokes the despair and misery some Métis felt following their armed resistance in 1885. His son attributed his father's behavioural problems to two things that had happened to him during the resistance: his imprisonment and the loss of all his possessions, as well as to the debts he was forced into afterwards.[150]

Mr. Rocheleau was not the only one to succumb to the difficulties of the years following the insurrection. Between drinking and "rambling," some committed crimes or applied themselves to annoying the police and administrative authorities. This seems to have been at least part of the motive behind the mail theft (a mail bag),[151] a crime committed between Batoche and Saskatoon in September 1888. Following his arrest, the accused appeared before the justice of the peace in Prince Albert in June 1889. There was no trial, and the accused was discharged for lack of sufficient evidence and probably also thanks to the favourable testimony of Father Moulin, the Batoche postmaster. This incident, in which the so-called friends of the accused testified in a contradictory or incriminating manner, reveals the presence of intrigue, jealousy and fear within the community. It is impossible to decide whether the accused did in fact commit the theft or whether his compatriots who had been called to testify wanted to be seen siding with the police in order to improve their own situation. The North-West Mounted Police was a major employer: it used Métis as guides, interpreters and workers in the barracks, and it gave out contracts for supplying animal feed and providing animal care.

Since the Métis were faced with problems and conflicts due largely to an unfavourable social and economic situation, their attitude and behaviour under the circumstances cannot be called either exceptional or exaggerated.

INTERACTION WITH AMERINDIANS

There were two Willow Cree reserves near Batoche and Duck Lake: Kàpeyakwàskonam (One Arrow) and Kàmiyistowesit (Beardy).[152] In the South Saskatchewan area, the contacts between the Cree and the French Canadians probably went back to the end of the 18th century. From 1840 on, there were more frequent encounters, since the Red River Métis regularly travelled on the Saskatchewan River. At the time of the winter camps, about 1850-70, they were in closer contact. Intermarriage and common economic interests, including hunting and the fur trade and the need for trade goods, made for continued close ties between the two groups. However, a new era seems to have begun between 1871 and 1877 with the signing of seven treaties with the Amerindians of the Canadian prairies together with the setting-up of Amerindian reserves, Treaty No. 6 dealing specifically with the area of our concern. Several Métis acted as interpreters and witnesses to the signing of this treaty. They prided themselves on being intermediaries between the French Canadians and Amerindians. Some thought themselves superior to Amerindians in that they were more independent and capable of becoming integrated into the lifestyle of Eurocanadians. Other Métis, who were closer to Amerindians in lifestyle and way of thinking, tried to settle near them. In general, Métis testimonies and behaviour reveal ambivalent feelings and sometimes harmonious, sometimes tense relations with Amerindians. One example was the 1885 insurrection, when the Cree on the Beardy and One Arrow reserves were divided over whether or not to support the Métis. Michel Dumas from Batoche, farming instructor on the One Arrow

Reserve and one of the resistance leaders, put pressure on the Amerindians to win them over to the Métis cause.[153] The precise number of Cree from the area who took up arms is not known, but there may have been about 50.[154] The Métis also tried to win the allegiance of bands living to the north and west, but few of their members fought with them at the Tourond coulee (Fish Creek) or at Batoche. The Cree from the two neighbouring reserves and the few groups from the north who joined the Métis set up camp on the west bank of the South Saskatchewan in Batoche. But the Dakota under Chief Wahpahissco (White Bonnet) from the Moose Hills Reserve (southern Saskatchewan) and another group of Wahpeton (north of Prince Albert) came in much larger numbers to join the Métis. The Dakota from Moose Hills had kinship ties with the Métis of Prairie Ronde. Their chief Charles Trottier, who was a friend and relative of Gabriel Dumont, and some 20 Métis and Dakota fought at the Tourond coulee and at Batoche. Two Dakota died in the Battle of the Coulee and one or two others at Batoche, and a number of them were wounded. The Dakota had set up camp on the east side of the river in Batoche, in a small prairie close to some Métis families, but on the opposite bank from the Cree, their traditional rivals. Amerindian support was important to the Métis, but during the conflict, it was uncertain and capricious. Fear of reprisals and loss of allowances induced some of them to leave before the decisive Battle of Batoche. Following the defeat, the Beardy band was temporarily excluded from allowances due it under the 1876 treaty, and its chief was relieved of his authority by government officials.[155] Both One Arrow and White Bonnet were taken to court. The Cree on the One Arrow Reserve were deprived of their rations, and some of them had to leave the reserve.

The Almighty-Voice (Kisimanitowewew) affair between 1895 and 1897 illustrates the constant friction between the Batoche Métis and their Cree neighbours on One Arrow. Gabriel Almighty-Voice, a young Cree from One Arrow, was charged with taking and slaughtering an ox from the reserve without the permission of the reserve officer (the representative of the Department of Indian Affairs). After being arrested and imprisoned in Duck Lake, the young man escaped and found refuge in the Minichinas Hills near the Venne ranch east of Batoche.

At this time, the Cree on the One Arrow Reserve subsisted on mixed farming. Their farming instructor Louis Marion was a Métis. Even if the Department of Indian Affairs helped them, among other things, by giving them cattle, the Cree lived in miserable conditions. Some of them found employment as workers or domestics in the Mounted Police barracks in Batoche and Duck Lake. However, Métis were generally preferred for those jobs, even as guides, interpreters and suppliers, which caused some resentment among the Cree against the Métis. The Mounted Police increased these tensions by using the Métis as intermediaries with the Amerindians. The Department of Indian Affairs added to the discontent by recruiting farming instructors, teachers and even reserve supervisors from among the Métis. If some things tended to separate the two peoples, others brought them closer: many Métis lived as miserably as the Amerindians, and some families within the two groups were held together by kinship ties.

It was within this context of strained social relations that the Mounted Police tried to recruit Métis in Batoche to hunt down Almighty-Voice. According to a police report, "Inspector Wilson had enrolled 30 Métis in Batoche, but they changed their minds and did not turn up" [translation].[156] Thanks to the actions of officer Odilon St. Denis from Duck Lake (a French-Canadian married to a Boucher from St. Louis) and to the intervention of representative Charles-Eugène Boucher, the police did succeed in rounding up enough volunteers to form a contingent. They then organized the manhunt. The police set up one of its bases of operation on the Venne ranch, and Napoléon Venne served as a guide. The fugitive's entrenchment was finally attacked in June 1897. The capture of Almighty-Voice and two of his companions caused several casualties on both sides.[157]

The collaboration of the Métis with the police in this unfortunate affair cast a long shadow over the relations between the Batoche Métis and the One Arrow Amerindians.

The Métis played a more direct role in education, even an "assimilating" one. Between 1888 and about 1915, they supplied the teachers at the Indian schools in Duck Lake and One Arrow. Several of them experienced difficulties and found it hard to be accepted.[158] The Amerindians were thus resisting an educational program that condemned their language and culture and was centred mainly on teaching the Christian religion. But the Métis in the area continued to occupy this kind of position and act as "agents of assimilation" among the Amerindians.

RELATIONS WITH FRENCH CANADIANS, FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRANTS AND OTHER NEIGHBOURING ETHNIC GROUPS

The first French Canadians to settle in the North-West after 1870 were often regarded as a cause of discord and corruption by the authorities. According to a nun at St. Albert:

> *For some time we have had strangers here who drink, and already there is disorder as a result of drunkenness ... causing us much pain. They are Canadian compatriots who do us this dishonour ... we fear that easier communications will attract a lot of riffraff who will destroy our cherished peace ....*[159] [Translation]

The same was true of the French, Belgians and other immigrants who began arriving in the South Saskatchewan area in the late 1880s. The religious authorities had hoped that these compatriots would serve as models and support for the Métis group. In their view, the two groups would consolidate and ensure the continuation of the French Catholic culture in the Canadian West. But some of them were disappointed, for from the very beginning, it was the Eurocanadians who became integrated with the Métis and adopted their lifestyle and culture.

> *Strange to say, we have here some Frenchmen from France, Belgians and Canadians ... and I must say that they, too, are not free from the faults with which we reproach our poor Métis .... And yet, we have such a great need of good Catholics to provide our people who are still half savage with a good example of hard work and a Christian life and to prevent the good lands in these parts from falling into the hands of Protestants.*[160] [Translation]

Several French Canadians had come to know these parts as freighters hired by local merchants, and in the 1870s, they decided to settle there. Ludger Gareau, his brothers Azarie and Napoléon, and their cousin Philippe-Charles Chamberland emigrated from Quebec between 1878 and 1881. Octave Régnier, originally from Quebec but settled at St. François-Xavier in Manitoba since 1878, moved to St. Louis in 1882 with his relatives, the Lépine family. Another French Canadian, Philippe Garnot, had also passed through Manitoba. They were soon followed by some

Frenchmen, among others Ferdinand Ladret, Louis Riguidel and Paul Schley. These people married into Métis families. In Batoche and St. Louis, there were also some "old" French Canadian families, who had come from Red River or arrived in the West before 1870. The Nault, Landry and Dumas families, who were already intermarried with the Métis when they arrived in Saskatchewan, are perhaps the best examples of integration and solidarity.

Between 1881 and 1885, some Francophones took up the cause with the Métis in presenting the government with demands for rights and reforms. In many cases, it was Francophones who become outraged and pushed the Métis into making their demands. In 1884, an Alsatian who had recently arrived in the country did not hesitate to openly declare his allegiance to Riel, impressed by the latter's personality and the soundness of Métis grievances.[161] Other Francophones — like some Métis — were in favour of protest but against taking up arms. Besides differing in their opinions about politics, Francophones and Métis also had different views on Louis Riel's religious thought. Some Francophones were uncomfortable with Gabriel Dumont's more militant anti-Canadian position, calling for the use of arms. Moreover, they felt little affinity with Amerindians and feared the consequences of an alliance between the two groups. In this they were encouraged by other Francophones in the service of the federal or territorial government or the North-West Mounted Police who supported the government position and thus fomented fear and intrigue in the community in 1884-85. Others had divided feelings, which caused Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney to state that he could not trust French Canadians in this matter.[162] Finally, during the 1885 uprising, most French Canadians and Frenchmen in the area tried to maintain a position of neutrality. Riel for his part called for unity and advocated a common front for his people whom he called "French Canadian Métis." He was hurt by the lack of sympathy by some who considered the Métis to be inferior,[163] and he accused the clergy of working against the Métis.[164] In spite of the 1885 "incidents," the general picture we get is of a spirit of solidarity and equality between French Canadians and Métis, which would last until the mass arrival of immigrants in the area at the turn of the century. According to oldtimers' testimony, "well, the Métis were people like us" [translation].[165]

The Métis reacted with some sensitivity to Eurocanadians' lack of sympathy for their native or "savage" heritage and their prejudices against it. A missionary illustrates this reaction, even if he is not an impartial observer:

> *In general, and with only a few exceptions, the Métis become annoyed when they see Whites give [for church, school, etc.] This to them is a cause of murmurs and complaints degenerating into jealousy of the white population who, they say, is hostile to them .... They formulate complaints ... are not to be consulted, refuse to come to meetings because they are ashamed of being unable to give like Whites, and on top of it, they are so sensitive.*[166] [Translation]

On the other hand, the pride and sensitivity of the Métis annoyed many Eurocanadians, especially those who thought themselves superior and wanted to dominate them. The Métis reacted either by isolating themselves or by putting on an air of indifference to avoid an unpleasant situation, or more rarely, by confronting their opponents. In this context, there is the example of the trader Georges Fisher who was subjected to the prejudices of the new Anglophone bourgeoisie in Duck Lake before he obtained an alcohol licence and opened a hotel in that town. A local businessmen stated:

> *As for Geo. Fisher I respect him very much but I do not think it would be fair for him to come over from Batoche and run us out who were here first, and I do not think his Mrs. [Amélie Poitras] is fit for the business. In the first place she can't talk English and in a very short time it will be the English peoples' trade that would keep the Hotel and not the French halfbreed trade at all as I know from experience that there is nothing in them.*[167]

The Francophone settlers who arrived during the 1890s and at the turn of the century showed a different attitude from that of their previous compatriots. This situation was due partly to the 1885 resistance: it was the reaction of a minority, which was itself subject to many prejudices, against another minority, notwithstanding the cultural ties between them. According to some witnesses, the French, Belgians and Swiss had fewer prejudices,[168] being less conservative in religious matters and more open to the various political and "racial" ideologies of the time. By contrast, French Canadians were said to hide behind the official position of the clergy who often lacked regard and sympathy for the Métis. It has also been suggested that the heterogeneous population centres at Duck Lake, St. Louis and Bonne Madone, exhibited fewer prejudices than the homogeneous villages of Bellevue and Marcelin.[169] Those attitudes are found to different degrees in different places and different families. On the one hand, according to an English settler at Duck Lake, the French from the old countries were more clannish, whereas the Métis and French Canadians were more sociable.[170] On the other hand, a Métis woman who had grown up close to the two Francophone communities stated that "the French Canadians who had come from Quebec considered the Métis to be inferior. This was very harmful to Métis progress" [translation].[171] The Batoche, Duck Lake and St. Louis registers support the latter statement since they record more marriages between French and Métis than between French Canadians and Métis.

The plans for Francophone colonization of the area were being directed mainly by the clergy, who had succeeded in getting the government to appoint priest-colonizers. The general aim was to make sure that the West would be colonized by Francophones and Catholics, by attracting colonists from Quebec and repatriating French Canadians who had settled in the United States. The Métis settlements would serve as rallying points. In the beginning, certain Métis, especially politicians and officials, supported the project.[172]

In 1890, when Father Morin visited Batoche as an immigration officer delegated by Bishop Pascal, a meeting was held to form an immigration committee, which would encourage and come to the aid of new colonists. Father Fourmond was elected president, Charles Nolin vice-president, and Georges Fisher secretary. The Métis offered to put up French Canadians temporarily and help them choose and work their lands. According to a witness at the assembly: "This committee appears very well disposed to Canadian immigration in our midst. It recognizes the pressing need for it, to support our institutions and all the interests of the French race on the banks of the Saskatchewan" [translation].[173] But because of the rivalries and divisions within the Métis community, the project never really got off the ground. After sending some colonists off to Edmonton, the Batoche Métis ended their direct involvement in Francophone colonization of the area.[174] The arrival of a number of French-Canadian colonists the following year was due to the efforts of the next priest-colonizer, Father Blais.

French immigration from Europe also had its share of difficulties. The Canadian government recruited immigrants through officers stationed abroad who knew nothing about our North-West. Better-off new arrivals were more attracted to the United States.[175] Finally, many immigrants had little aptitude for or interest in farming and headed for the urban centres. The Métis helped several French and Belgian settlers upon arrival. This support gave rise to good relations between the two groups. Moreover, the French were victims of the same prejudices as the Métis on the part of the authorities. In a confidential letter, the assistant under-secretary of the Interior reported a comment by Dr. Stewart:

> *[that] they are as poor as poverty itself, that they are not good farmers; that indeed they are not even energetic or willing workers, and that they drop quite into the Half-breed habits of living.*[176]

In fact, Francophone immigration was slow before 1900, and the arrival of many "foreign" colonists such as Poles, Ukrainians and Mennonites put an end to the project of creating townships with Francophone majorities in the area. It is interesting to note that the Métis in turn harboured certain prejudices against Eastern European immigrants. They deplored the presence of "Galicians" in Fish Creek and described some of their customs and practices as "primitive," and they even went so far as to notify Brother Guillet in Fish Creek that they did not want "Galicians" to dirty their chapel or attend their mass.[177] Most of the Métis in the area sold their lands around the turn of the century. This exodus was partly due to the immigration of so-called foreigners and to the hope of pursuing a new lifestyle in less developed areas, further north and west. Families headed for Batoche, Aldina-Leask and Battleford. By forcing the Métis to withdraw to a few centres, Eurocanadian colonization had the effect of strengthening the Métis presence in those areas.

It is ironic that it was generally the Métis who preceded and supported Francophone immigration.[178] This was recognized at the time.

> *There are a few small Métis missions all around Batoche, which have acted like points of attraction for French-speaking Catholic colonists. Almost everywhere they have gone, the sons of the prairie have served unwittingly as scouts of French Catholic colonization.*[179] [Translation]

French immigration in the area was one of the big topics of the weekly, *Le Patriote de l'Ouest*, founded in Duck Lake in 1910. But as a group the Métis hardly figured in its pages, except for Louis Schmidt, who was a frequent collaborator, and a few other members of the intellectual elite. In 1911 to 1914, several articles about immigration advanced the thesis that Eurocanadians would replace the Métis, who were doomed to assimilation or would take refuge up north looking for "new frontiers." A French journalist who visited Batoche in 1911 saw little cause for optimism. The Métis did not appear to have many future prospects. The new generation lacked motivation and was losing its traditions: "the vestiges of the past hardly last in this country which constantly produces youngsters heedless and scornful of the past" [translation].[180]

Nonetheless, at the beginning of the 20th century, the Métis and Francophones co-operated on other projects. The French-Canadian Society, founded in Duck Lake in 1912, had the help and support of the Union Nationale Métisse St. Joseph du Manitoba. The president, Roger Goulet, worked in collaboration with Louis Schmidt, representative for St. Louis.[181] But few Métis centres celebrated Saint-Jean Baptiste Day or became involved in other social issues of concern to Francophones.[182]

The social dislocation noted by Marcel Giraud in 1935 in several Métis communities,[183] though mitigated in Batoche and neighbouring centres, was due to several factors. One of them was rejection and lack of support in the Francophone community, which drove the Métis to assimilate to the Anglophones. But increased contacts with other ethnic groups, lack of support groups with a cultural mission, and an inferiority complex about spoken Métchif French also contributed to their loss of identity. Starting with the 1911 census, the Métis identified themselves more as "French" or "English," depending on their family names and cultural aspirations.

Restrictive education and language legislation promulgated between 1889 and 1918 checked the maintenance and expansion of French in Saskatchewan. On the other hand, during the 1930s, the Métis, "a class of poor people,"[184] tended to identify with the CCF party. The Catholic clergy and Francophone elite of the period, who were much more conservative in spirit, condemned this so-called "communist" organization. The Métis had gradually been deprived of their traditional social structures and excluded from the new ones.

Notes

Society and Way of Life

1 SBAA, Taché Papers, Father Moulin to Bishop Taché, 14 July 1883.

2 GA, Richard Hardisty Papers, file 31, letter 143, "Condensed Report of a Meeting of Métis Winterers at Saint Laurent ...," 31 December 1871.

3 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, Introduction.

4 GA, Richard Hardisty Papers, Census of Métis at St. Laurent near Fort Carlton District in 1871. The St. Laurent colony or "St. Laurent Settlement Reserve" extended to about 10 miles north of the crossing operated by Xavier Letendre starting in 1873 and to 15 miles south of the 1870-71 winter camp (St-Laurent-de-Grandin), i.e. roughly as far as Gabriel Dumont's Crossing.

5 NA, RG15, Vol. 238, file 10492.

6 See Métis population wintering at St. Laurent in 1871, Appendix C.

7 DA, Father A. André, "Mémorial en réponse au questionnaire du R. P. Visiteur, octobre 1883."

8 PAA, OMI, Bishop V.J. Grandin, List of missions of the Catholic diocese of St. Albert, 1883.

9 Canada, Parliament, *Census of the Three Provisional Districts of the North-West Territories 1884-1885* (Ottawa: Maclean Roger, 1886).

10 Canada, *Censuses* of 1881, 1891, 1901 and 1911 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer). The 1881 census does not list the Métis, while the 1891 census lists only the total for the Prince Albert District. The 1901 census reports 71 families and 372 persons in Batoche, 889 in Duck Lake and 227 in St. Louis. No figures are reported for St. Laurent. The 1911 census counted the Métis together with the French Canadians or allowed them to identify themselves as Indians, which few Métis in the area chose to do.

11 *Le Canada ecclésiastique* (Montreal: Beauchemin, 1887-1935); PADA, Parish register, St-Antoine-de-Padoue Parish, Batoche,

1881-1925; PADA, Spiritual and financial reports, St-Antoine-de-Padoue Parish, Batoche, 1924-1942.

12 Figures derived from two sources: SABS, Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead Files, No. 81184 (1884) (hereafter "Homestead Files") and the 1870 Manitoba census: PAM, MG2, B3.

13 An expression used by Mrs. Christine (Dumas) Pilon and supported by her collection of photographs and her family journal.

14 These inferences are based on a study of a whole set of documents, in particular the claims for losses following the 1885 rebellion, the Fisher-Deschambault Collection (SBAA), the Hillyard Mitchell Collection (SABS), the Homestead Files (SABS), the correspondence of Maxime Lépine (SBAA), Louis Schmidt (SBAA and PAM), C.-E. Boucher (SABS), Alex Fisher (NA) and some other Métis who left eyewitness accounts, as well as on the correspondence of missionaries.

15 SABS, Homestead Files, No. 81184. See also PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1874-1879 [Father André].

16 DA, Xavier Letendre's account of the origins and commercial activities of Batoche, transcribed by Father Valentin Végréville, 1882.

17 The rural society in question is the French-Canadian one, whose structures were apparent in Batoche. On the subject of French-Canadian society at the end of the 19th century, see Léon Gérin's study, "L'Habitant de Saint-Justin," *Mémoires de la Société Royale du Canada*, series 2, Vol. 4, No. 1 (1898), pp. 139-216; Lionel Groulx, "La famille canadienne-française, ses traditions, son rôle," in *Notre maître le passé* (Montreal: Granger, 1937), 3rd ed., pp. 115-151; and the more recent work by Susan M. Trofimenkoff, *The Dream of a Nation: A Social and Intellectual History of Québec* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1982).

18 These inferences were drawn from a study of the Homestead Files (SABS), the correspondence of missionaries in the district (SBAA, PAA [OMI], DA, EAA), and accounts or testimonies by the Métis themselves.

19 Take for example the (Xavier) Letendre and (Salomon) Venne families, some of whose members were educated by European standards. John Letendre obtained a teaching certificate, his sister Josette completed her Grade 12, and David Venne became a lawyer. Other members of these families (e.g. William and Napoléon Venne and Eugène Boucher) were less educated, but did well in business. Still others had few professional or commercial aspirations and worked as unskilled labourers or "hired men."

20 This political alignment was particularly evident in the 1886, 1887, 1888 and 1891 elections. See ch. 3: "Political Action."

21 PADA, Correspondence of Father Pierre E. Myre, Letter to Bishop Prud'homme, 30 November 1927.

22 Charles Nolin's speech on the Métis' national day, 4 July 1887. See account in *Le Manitoba* (St. Boniface), 18 August 1887. Louis Riel also raised this topic repeatedly in his writings.

23 Tamara K. Hareven, "Family Time and Historical Time," in A.S. Rossi, J. Kagan and T.K. Hareven, eds., *The Family* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), p. 69.

24 Conversation with Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981. She had to do such chores as taking care of the animals.

25 PADA, List of parishioners in Batoche, 1924, Appendix D.

26 Tamara K. Hareven, op. cit., p. 62.

27 PADA, Parish register of St-Antoine-de-Padoue, Batoche, 1885-1905.

28 For example, Théophile and Patrice Caron, Joseph Branconnier and Louis Letendre, to cite only a few.

29 PAM, St. François-Xavier, Manitoba, parish register, 1834-82. The Delorme, McGillis, Gervais, Fisher and Boyer families were well-to-do merchants' families who intermarried.

30 According to the genealogical records of Métis families in Batoche and vicinity compiled by the author.

31 This union caused a lot of commotion in the family, whose members were aware of the risks of marriage between first cousins. The couple had to elope.

32 There is the example of Xavier Letendre's and Antoine Richard's wills and the estates of Jean Caron Sr. and Salomon Venne.

33 Testimony by Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981.

34 Xavier Letendre and his brother-in-law Charles Thomas (husband of Hélène Letendre) fought over lot 48. Letendre finally went to court, which decided in his favour. 1895.

35 PAA, OMI, Journal of Brother Célestin Guillet, Batoche, 1895.

36 According to the Homestead Files and correspondence on the subject of lands, SABS. After a quantitative analysis of these sources, the average size varied between 750 and 1310 sq. ft. According to a sample of 130 houses between 1885 and 1933, 46 (35.4%) were 750 to 980 sq. ft. (28.5%) 1000 to 1310 sq. ft. About 25 percent were less than 750 sq. ft. and 11 percent more than 1350 sq. ft.

37 Testimony of Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981.

38 Ibid.: she cited a few cases. Others appear in the court records.

39 NA, RG15, Vol. 914, Testimony before the Commission on Rebellion Losses.

40 Conversation with Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981.

41 SABS, Homestead Files, No. 81184.

42 NA, RG15, Vols. 513, 535, 914-918, 923, 928, Testimony before the Commission on Rebellion Losses. Unfortunately, only a few detailed inventories have come down to us, including among others the claims of Ludger Gareau, Xavier Letendre, Salomon Venne, Baptiste Boyer, Georges Fisher and Jean Caron Sr.

43 PAM, MG9, A31, Memoirs of Louis Schmidt, pp. 4-5.

44 Guillaume Charette, *L'Espace de Louis Goulet* (Winnipeg: Éditions Bois-Brûlés, 1976), pp. 66-68.

45 Ibid., p. 66.

46 Loc. cit.

47 Ibid., p. 68.

48 Conversations with Mr. Elie Dumont, Duck Lake, 1982 and 1983.

49 Conversation with Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981.

50 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent.

51 Conversation with Mrs. Alexandrine (Fleury) Nicolas, Duck Lake, 1982.

52 PAM, MG9, A31, Memoirs of Louis Schmidt, p. 1.

53 SBAA, Taché Papers, Father Moulin to Bishop Taché, Île à la Crosse, 18 March 1867.

54 Conversations with Mrs. Alexandrine (Fleury) Nicolas, Duck Lake, 1981 and 1982.

55 Conversations with Mrs. Marie (Caron) Parenteau, Batoche, 1976 and Mrs. Alexandrine (Fleury) Nicolas, Duck Lake, 1981 and 1982.

56 Conversations with Mrs. Alexandrine (Fleury) Nicolas, Duck Lake, 1981 and 1982.

57 Conversations with Mrs. Adélaïde (Pilon) Ranger, Batoche, 1976 and 1977.

58 Conversations with Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981 and Mr. Omer Courchesne, Duck Lake, 1981. Mr. Courchesne, a former teacher in Batoche and St. Laurent, said that this dish was still very popular in the 1930s.

59 Conversation with Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981.

60 Ibid.

61 Conversations with Mrs. Alexandrine (Fleury) Nicolas, Duck Lake, 1981 and 1982.

62 Raymond Montpetit, *Le temps des fêtes au Québec* (Montreal: Éditions de l'Homme, 1978), p. 119.

63 Conversation with Mr. Omer Courchesne, Duck Lake, 1981.

64 GA, Recollections of Eva Pozer Powell. She was the daughter of W.J. Pozer of Duck Lake. Her father had business connections and friendly relations with Louis Marion, Xavier Letendre, Patrice Parenteau and C.-E. Boucher.

65 PAM, MG9, A6, Guillaume Charette, Memoirs of Louis Goulet.

66 Conversation with Sister Irène Schmidt, Prince Albert, 1976. Sister Irène is the daughter of Charles-Pantaléon and the granddaughter of Louis Schmidt.

67 GA, Faithful Companions of Jesus Collection, Annals, St. Anne's Convent, Prince Albert, 1887.

68 Conversation with Mr. Omer Courchesne, Duck Lake, 1981. The method referred to was that of Mr. Baptiste Ouellette of St-Laurent-de-Grandin.

69 Conversations with Mrs. Alexandrine (Fleury) Nicolas, Duck Lake, 1981 and 1982.

70 SABS, Hillyard Mitchell Papers, A349, B.8-10, Accounts, including those of Xavier Letendre, Patrice Parenteau, Georges Fisher, Jean Caron, William Boyer, David Venne, Pierre Parenteau, etc.

71 Loc. cit.

72 Conversation with Mrs. Marie-Louise (Ethier) Langlois (first married to Ernest Caron), Bellevue, 1981.

73 Hector Berthelot, *Le bon vieux temps* (Montreal: Beauchemin, 1916), p. 87-88.

74 Conversation with Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981.

75 PAM, MG9, A31, Memoirs of Louis Schmidt, Addenda, p. 2.

76 Conversation with Mrs. Béatrice (Lépine) Boucher, St. Louis, 1977.

77 Conversations with Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981 and with Mrs. Alexandrine (Fleury) Nicolas, Duck Lake, 1981 and 1982.

78 Conversation with Mrs. Adélaïde (Pilon) Ranger, Batoche, 1976 and 1977.

79 Conversation with Mrs. Béatrice (Lépine) Boucher, St. Louis, 1977.

80 *Times and North-West Review* (Prince Albert), 3 January 1890.

81 For some examples, see Appendix E.

82 Ottawa, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Canadian Ethnology Department, Richard Johnston Collection, recordings done in St. Louis and Lebret, Saskatchewan in 1957 and songs recorded in Batoche and Duck Lake by Mr. Henri Létourneau for the St. Boniface Museum in 1972 and 1973.

83 These elements are evident in the collection of recordings in the Canadian Museum of Civilization and in the songs sung for the author by "old-timers" in Batoche and vicinity.

84 *Times* (Prince Albert), 22 January 1892.

85 SABS, At. "G," 117, Father André to A.E. Forget, 17 January 1884.

86 Conversation with Mrs. Béatrice (Lépine) Boucher, St. Louis, 1977. Mrs. Boucher is the widow of Frédéric Boucher, singer and storyteller.

87 Conversation with Sister Irène Schmidt, Prince Albert, 1976.

88 Conversation with Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981.

89 Conversation with Mrs. Adélaïde (Pilon) Ranger, Batoche, 1976.

90 Conversation with Sister Irène Schmidt, Prince Albert, 1976.

91 *Missions des Oblats de Marie-Immaculée*, Father Fourmond to the Superior-General, 27 December 1878, p. 193.

92 Prayer recited by Sister Irène Schmidt, Prince Albert, 1976.

93 *Times and Saskatchewan Review* (Prince Albert), 26 July 1889.

94 Conversation with Mr. Joseph Jobin, Wakaw, 1976.

95 Conversation with Mrs. Lumina Gaudet, Batoche, 1976.

96 Conversation with Mr. Joseph Jobin, Wakaw, 1976.

97 *Le Patriote de l'Ouest* (Duck Lake), 16 October 1910.

98 Conversations with Sister Irène Schmidt, Prince Albert, 1976 and Mrs. Adélaïde (Pilon) Ranger, Batoche, 1976.

99 "Pèlerinage à Notre-Dame de Saint-Laurent, Vicariat de la Saskatchewan, 16 juillet 1906," *Les Cloches de St-Boniface*, 1906, pp. 250-252.

100 Loc. cit.

101 Ibid., p. 251.

102 Loc. cit.

103 Conversation with Mrs. Béatrice (Lépine) Boucher, St. Louis, 1977.

104 Conversation with Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981.

105 Loc. cit.

106 Conversation with Mr. Elie Dumont, Duck Lake, 1983.

107 Conversation with Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981.

108 NA, RG15, Vol. 914, file 892789, H. Mitchell's declaration, "Rebellion Losses Claim," 1885; SABS, Hillyard Mitchell Papers, A 349, I 40, Statement and Account of Losses incurred by H. Mitchell in 1885.

109 Conversation with Mrs. Alexandrine (Fleury) Nicolas, Duck Lake, 1982.

110 *Missions des Oblats de Marie-Immaculée*, Father Fourmond to the Superior-General, 27 December 1878, p. 188.

111 Loc. cit.

112 Some investigators have looked into the origins and peculiarities of "Métchif." See in particular: Robert Papen, "Un parler français méconnu de l'ouest canadien: le métis," Manuscript on file, Department of Linguistics, University of Quebec at Montreal, 1984, 24 p. and John C. Crawford, ed., *The Michif Dictionary: Turtle Mountain Chippewa Cree* (Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1983).

113 SBAA, Taché Papers, Father Moulin to Bishop Langevin, 31 December 1897.

114 Conversation with Sister Irène Schmidt, Prince Albert, 1976.

115 Conversation with Mr. Omer Courchesne, Duck Lake, 1981.

116 See ch. 2, "Relations with the Clergy," section on Education.

117 Conversation with Mrs. Alexandrine (Fleury) Nicolas, Batoche, 1982. Alexandrine is the daughter of Patrice Fleury Jr. and Justine Montour. Her maternal grandparents were Abraham Montour and Marie Pagé.

118 Robert-Lionel Séguin, *La civilisation traditionnelle de l'"habitant" aux* 17^e *et* 18^e *siècles* (Montreal: Fides, 1967), p. 575.

119 Loc. cit.

120 Marius Barbeau, "Blason, géographie et généalogies populaires du Québec," *Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 22 (1920), p. 346.

121 These nicknames were listed in the documents or reported in conversations which the author had with old-timers in Batoche, Duck Lake, St. Louis and elsewhere.

122 Conversation with Mr. Joseph Jobin, Wakaw, 1976.

123 George Manuel and Michael Posluns, *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality* (Don Mills: Collier-Macmillan, 1974), p. 53.

124 *Times* (Prince Albert), 21 March 1888.

125 *Le Patriote de l'Ouest* (Prince Albert), 1 July 1915.

126 NA, RG18, C1, Vol. 2836, Sergeant Martin to Commanding Officer in Prince Albert, Batoche, 23 May 1891.

127 Ibid., Sergeant Albert J. Mountain to Commanding Officer in Prince Albert, 12 May 1889.

128 Ibid., Vol. 2841, Inspector Huot to Commanding Officer in Prince Albert, 9 July 1890.

129 Ibid., Vol. 2836, Corporal Lasker to Commanding Officer in Prince Albert, 5 July 1892.

130 Ibid., Vol. 2841, Inspector Huot to Commanding Officer in Prince Albert, 9 July 1890.

131 SBAA, Taché Papers, Father Moulin to Bishop Taché, 14 July 1883.

132 *Times and Saskatchewan Review* (Prince Albert), 26 July 1889.

133 The correspondence of Bishop Pascal and some missionaries suggests and in some cases states explicitly that certain priests drank excessively. Isolation, boredom, anxiety and immaturity were cited as reasons. One example was that of Father André under the "pressures" of 1885.

134 PAA, OMI, Journal of Brother Célestin Guillet, Batoche, 11 October 1981.

135 Conversation with Mrs. Justine (Caron) St-Germain, Batoche, 1981.

136 PADA, Correspondence of Father Pierre E. Myre, Letter to Bishop Prud'homme, 30 November 1927, and comments by an informant who chose to remain anonymous.

137 GNMA, Letters to the Mother-General, Vol. 1, Sister Emery to Mother Deschamps, St. Albert, 6 January 1871.

138 Ibid., 26 March 1872.

139 Conversations with Mrs. Armandine (Gareau) Gaudet, Batoche, 1976 and Bellevue, 1977.

140 Conversation with Mrs. Lumina Gaudet, Batoche, 1976.

141 PAA, OMI, Journal of Brother Célestin Guillet, Fish Creek, February 22, 1903.

142 May Elizabeth McInnes, *Essentials of Communicable Disease* (St. Louis: C.V. Mioshy, 1975), pp. 121-124.

143 Ibid., p. 128 and *The Canadian Magazine* (Toronto), Vol. 1, No. 8 (October 1893), pp. 628-633.

144 NA, RG18, C1, Vol. 2837, L. Hopper to Commanding Officer at Prince Albert, 15 February 1898.

145 SABS, Department of Agriculture, Lands Branch files, AGII, lot 26, T45-27-2.

146 NA, RG15, Vol. 914, Claims for losses suffered in 1885.

147 Ibid., RG18, C1, Vol. 2841, file C, part 2.

148 Ibid., Vol. 2845, file R, part 1.

149 Ibid., B5, Vol. 2480, file B, part 2.

150 Ibid., Vol. 2481, file C, part 1.

151 Ibid., Vol. 2485, file "R. "

152 PAA, OMI, Liber animarum, Duck Lake. According the these notes, the Willow Cree were descendants of George Sutherland (Okayasiw), a Scotsman who took native wives.

153 He had reportedly told them to kill their cattle and had forced the young men on the reserve to come to Batoche. This act of "treason" and his participation in the insurrection earned him a prison sentence, but Dumas fled with Dumont to the United States. After being

given amnesty in 1887, he returned to Canada, but the government naturally refused to consider him for any position.

154 The population of the One Arrow Reserve was about 200 in 1885.

155 *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966-), Vol. 11: "1881-1890," s.v. Kàmiyistowesit, p. 458.

156 NA, RG18, B5, Vol. 2480, Assistant Commissioner to Commanding Officer, June 1897.

157 Martin Robin, *The Bad and the Lonely* (Toronto: S. Lorimer, 1976), pp. 66-93.

158 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1888 [Father Fourmond].

159 GNMA, Letters to the Mother-General, Vol. 1, Sister Emery to Mother Deschamps, 3 September 1872.

160 DA, Letters of priests to the Sisters of Visitation of Le Mans, Father Fourmond to Mother Gertrude, 18 April 1888.

161 PAM, MG3, D2, Louis Riel Papers, Address of Mr. L.R. St-Louis de Gladiou to Mr. Louis Riel.

162 GA, Edgar Dewdney Papers, E. Dewdney to John A. Macdonald, [March] 1885.

163 DA, Microfilm 710 of the SBAA, "Notes d'un Père de Prince-Albert" [Father Végréville], 17-19 August 1884.

164 Loc. cit.

165 Conversations with Mr. Armand Gaudet, Prince Albert, 1976 and with Mr. Emile Magnin, Batoche, 1981.

166 PAA, OMI, Father A.H. Bigonesse, "Historique de Saint-Vital de Battleford, 1877-1901."

167 SABS, Hillyard Mitchell Papers, A349, 17, Angus Thompson to H. Mitchell, 10 January 1892.

168 This was the conclusion we reached following our conversations with French nationals, French Canadians and Métis.

169 The relations between Bellevue and Batoche were particularly strained from the 1920s on. The Métis especially were convinced that this tension was harmful to the preservation of the French language.

170 Conversation with Mr. Fred Anderson, Rosthern, 1976.

171 Conversation with Sister Irène Schmidt, Prince Albert, 1976. She claimed not to have suffered personally from this attitude because her parents were fairly well-to-do and educated. Their living standards and customs were the same.

172 PAA, OMI, Codex historicus of St-Laurent-de-Grandin, 1890-92, 5 October 1890.

173 Ibid., 10 October 1890.

174 SBAA, Taché Papers, Bishop Pascal to Bishop Taché, 18 October 1891.

175 Canada, Parliament, *Sessional Papers*, Vol. 11, No. 25 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer), p. 86, "Rapport de l'abbé H.L. Vachon, 11 juillet 1905."

176 SABS, Hillyard Mitchell Papers, A349, I20, A.M. Burgess to H. Mitchell, 22 February 1894.

177 PAA, OMI, Journal of Brother Célestin Guillet, Fish Creek, 1900 and 1901.

178 See eyewitness account by Gaston Giscard about colonization in the Jackfish Lake area. Gaston Giscard, *Dans la Prairie canadienne - On the Canadian Prairie* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1982).

179 *Le Patriote de l'Ouest* (Prince Albert), 16 April 1914.

180 Ibid., 7 December 1911.

181 Ibid., 16 June 1914.

182 At least this is the impression we get from reading *Le Patriote de l'Ouest*: the Métis did not participate in editing the journal and were not invited to contribute to it.

183 Marcel Giraud, *Le Métis canadien* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1945), pp. 1211-1286. Giraud personally visited many Métis centres, including Batoche, in 1935-36.

184 Testimony of Mr. Martin Dumont, Duck Lake.

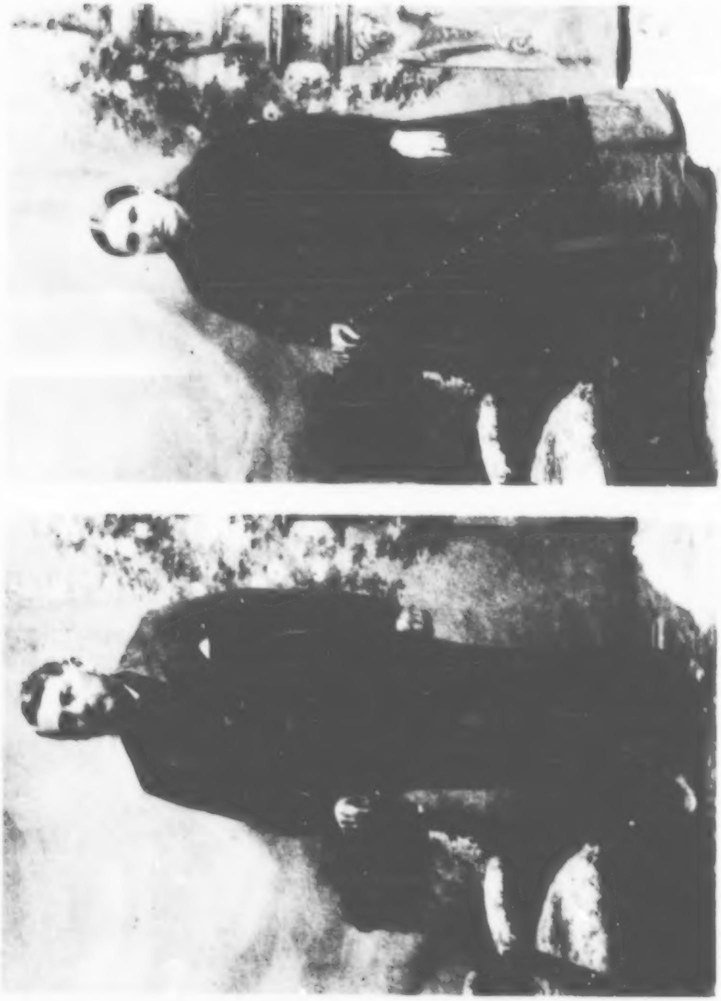


Fig. 3 François-Xavier Letendre dit Batoche (1841-1901) and his wife, Marguerite Parenteau (1843-1937). *Canadian Parks Service, Winnipeg, Batoche Collection.*

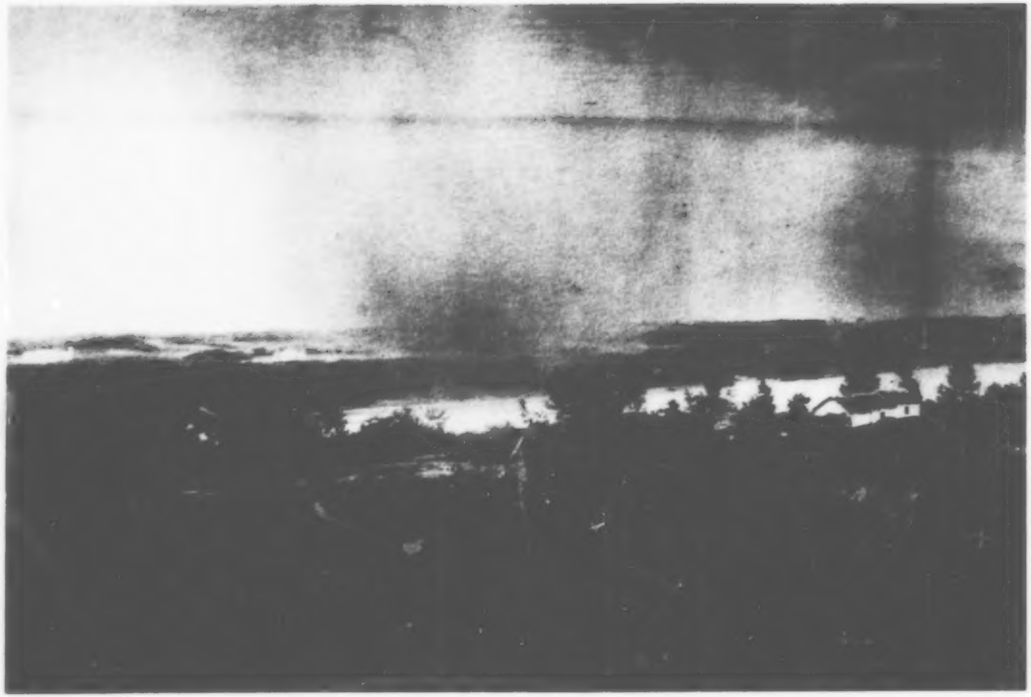


Fig. 4 Batoche Village is in the background. Also on the opposite side of the river are Letendre's house to the right and the village stores at far left. On the near shore was the ferry landing and, at right, the Alexander Pierre Fisher buildings. *Société historique de Saint-Boniface.*

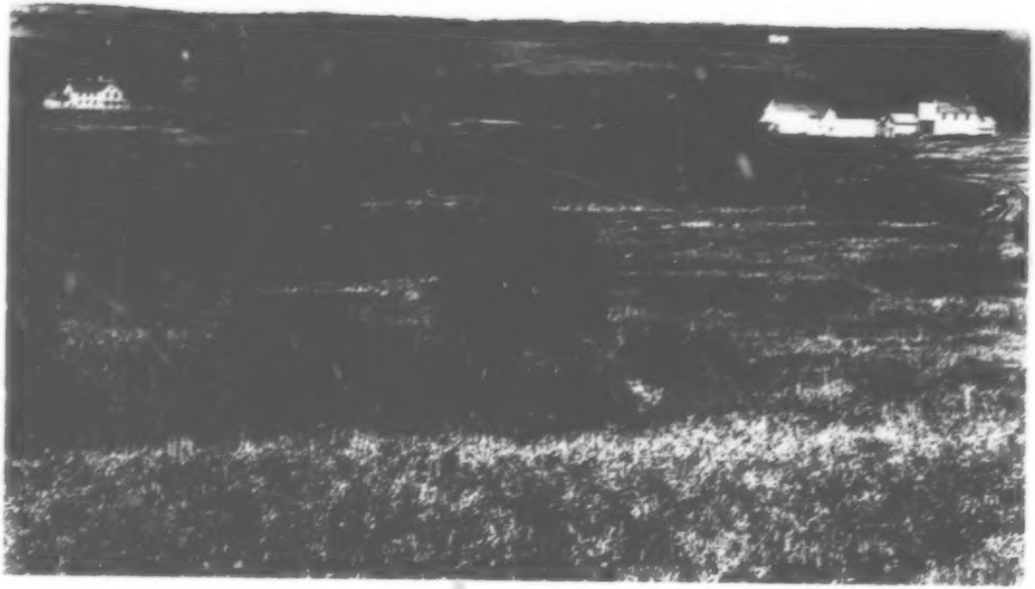


Fig. 5 Batoche village in 1891, showing stores on the right, Letendre's house on the left, and the trail leading to the village and to Batoche's Crossing. *Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Victor Acker Collection, N855. Photo: Steele and Wing, 14 July 1891.*

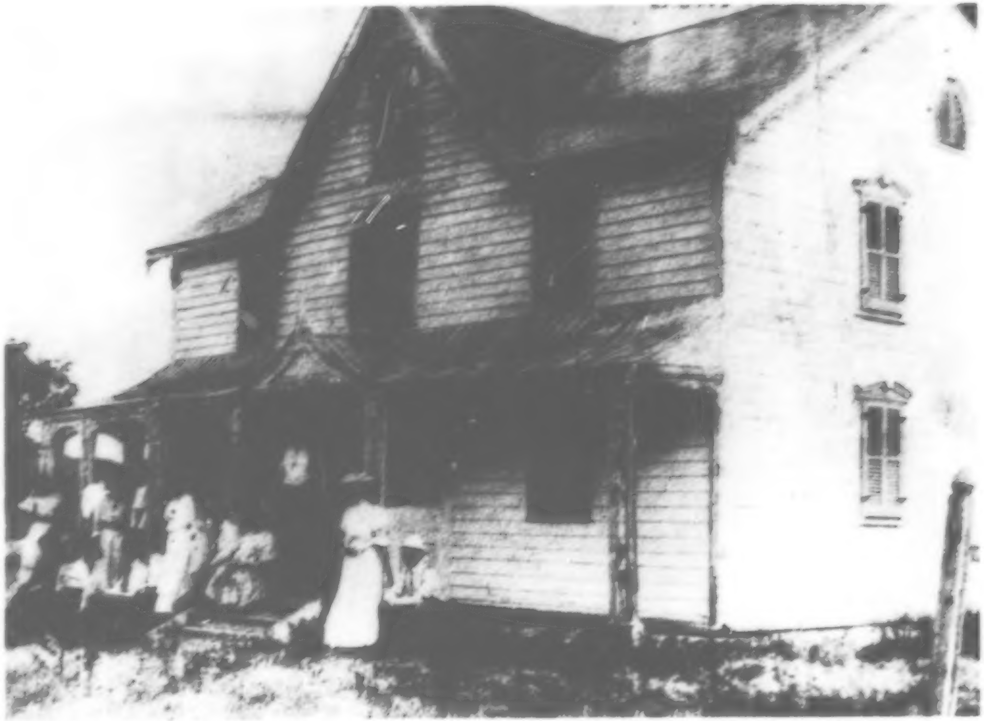


Fig. 6 F.-X. Letendre house and his family, probably on 4 September 1894, on the occasion of marriage of Florestine Letendre (standing at right) to Bruno Venne. *Saskatchewan Archives Board, Regina, R-A5634.*

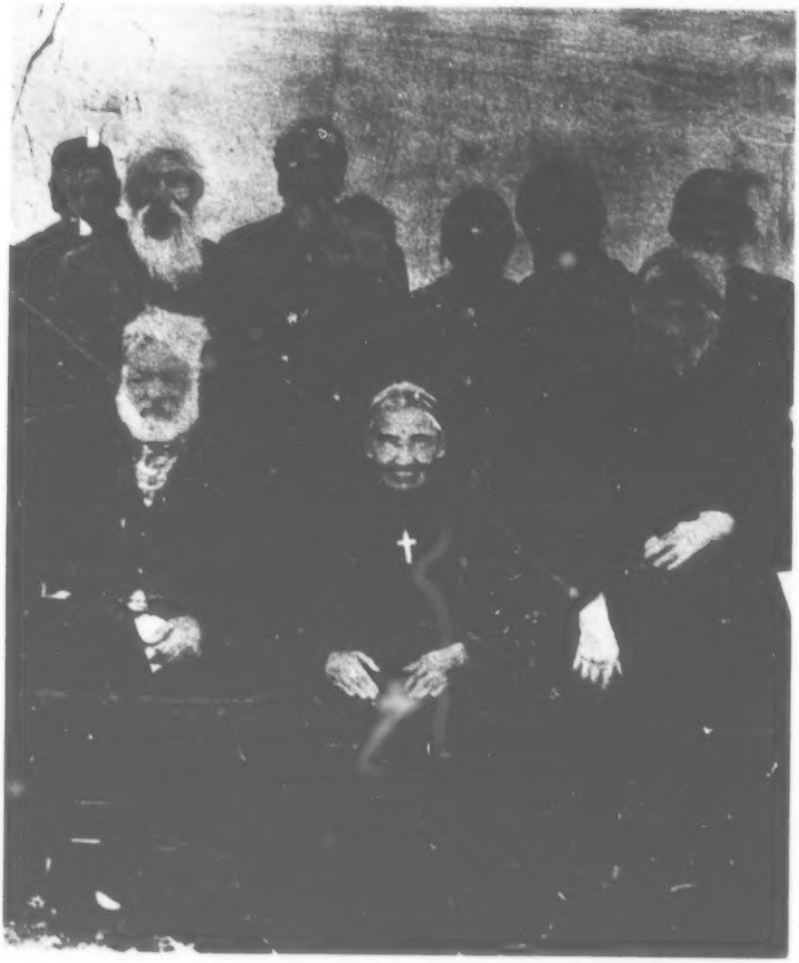


Fig. 7 The pioneers of Batoche and of St. Laurent, ca. 1900. Seated, William Boyer and his wife Julienne Bousquet; standing from left to right: Moïse Ouellette, an Arcand ("José"?), Baptisens Parenteau, Father F.-X. Simonin, Josephte or Nancy (McKay) Arcand, Félicité (Boyer) Breland, Hélène (Boyer) Racette, Jonas Moreau. *Canadian Parks Service, Winnipeg, Batoche Collection, OB 3827.*

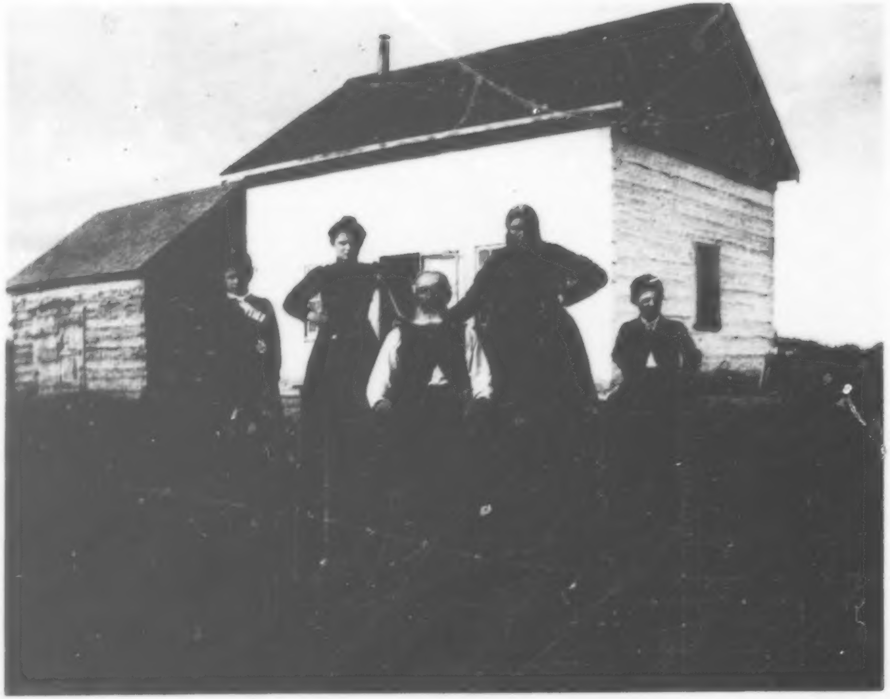


Fig. 8 Jean Caron Sr. (ca. 1833-1905) and his wife Marguerite Dumas (1842-1937), with one of their sons and two of their granddaughters, in front of their house, lot 52, Batoche, ca. 1895. *Provincial Archives of Alberta, OMI Collection.*

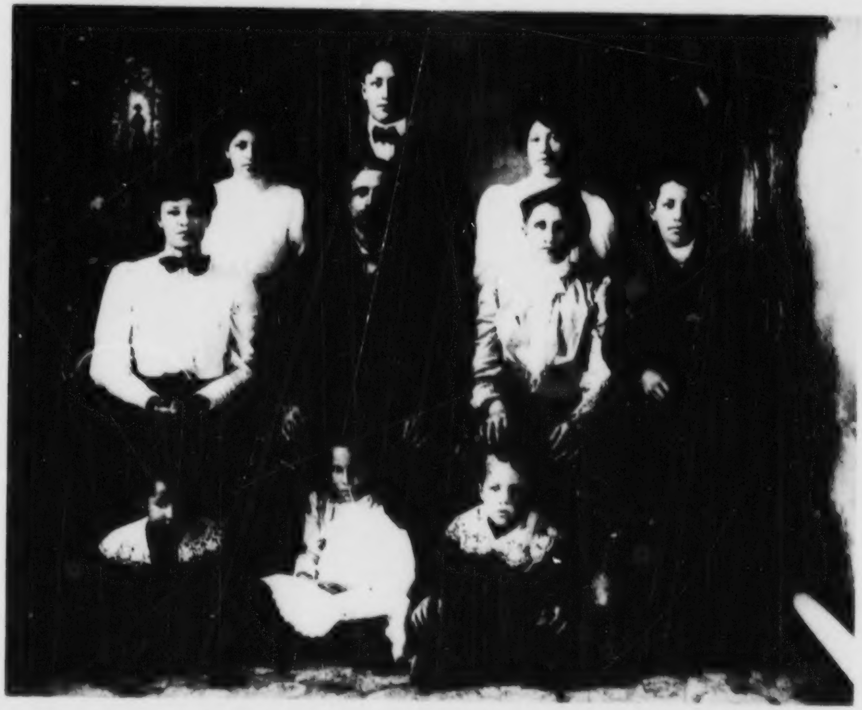


Fig. 9 Ludger Gareau (1855-1954), his wife Madeleine Dumas (1868-1958) and their family, ca. 1905. In Batoche, Gareau built the church, rectory and the Letendre buildings. *Canadian Parks Service, courtesy of Gérard Chamberland.*

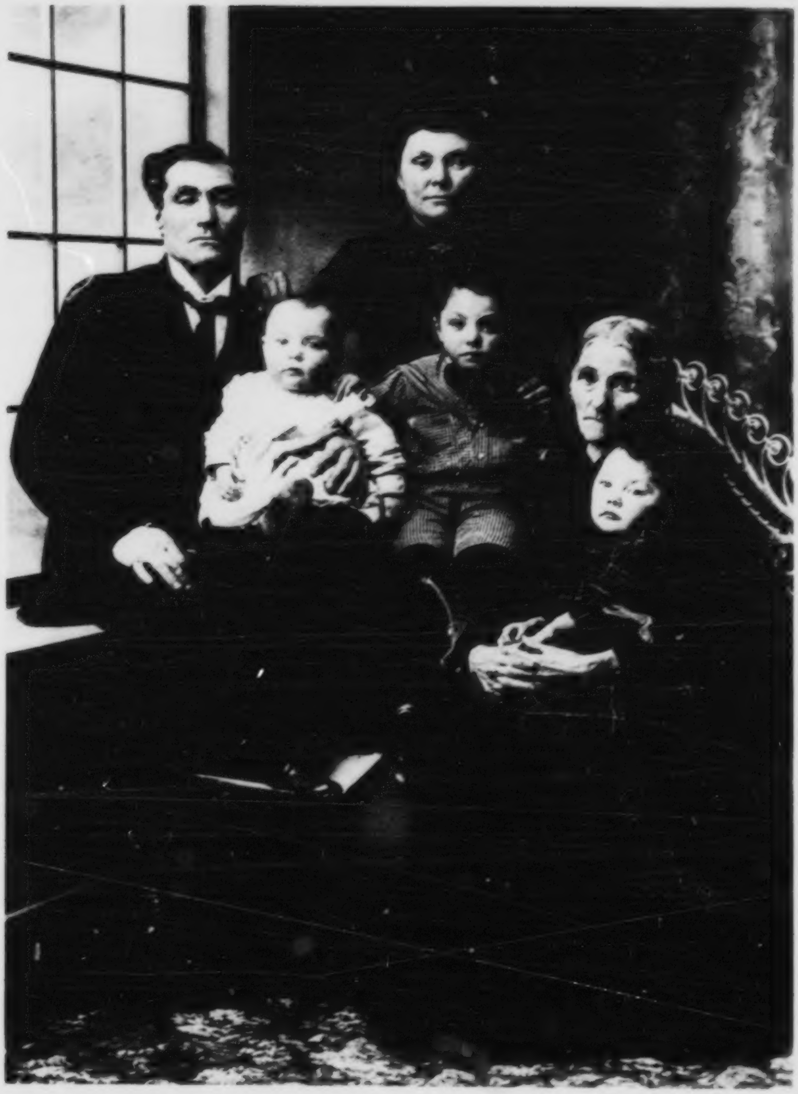


Fig. 10 Théophile Caron (1866-1944), his third wife Lisa Gervais, and their children. Seated at right is Grandmother Gervais. *Canadian Parks Service, Winnipeg, courtesy of Walter and Marie Fidler.*

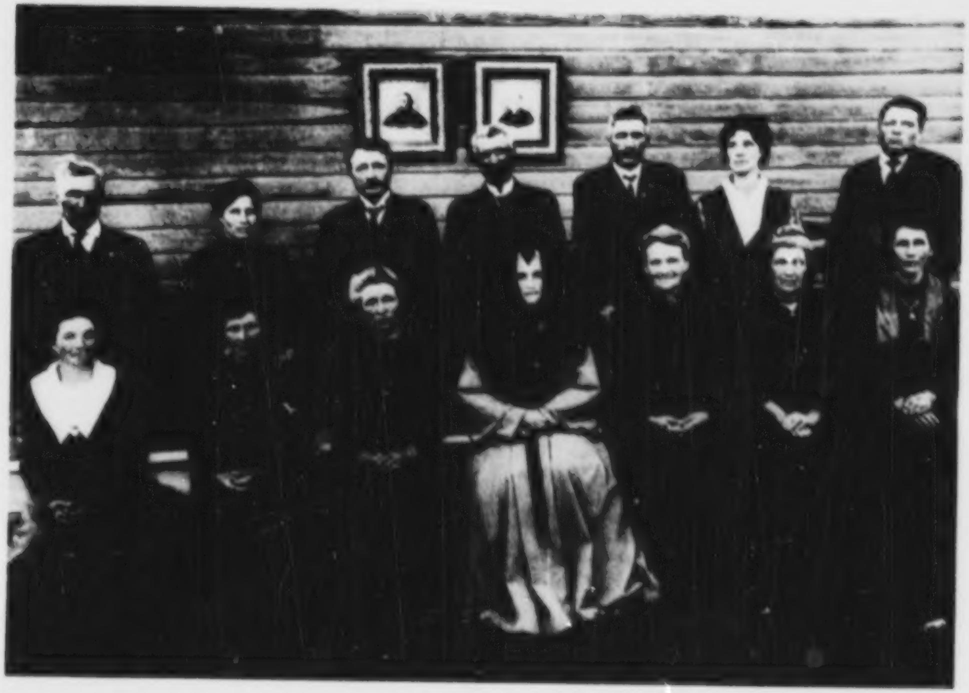


Fig. 11 The Boucher family of St. Louis, ca. 1915. On the wall are portraits of their parents Jean-Baptiste Boucher and Marguerite Lespérance. Standing left to right, Baptiste Jr., Délima, Charles-Eugène, Salomon, Frédéric, Élise and Joseph. Seated left to right, Sara, Caroline, Marguerite, Emma (Grey Nun), Marie, Rose, Alvina. *Canadian Parks Service, courtesy of Sister Marie-Madeleine Tournier.*

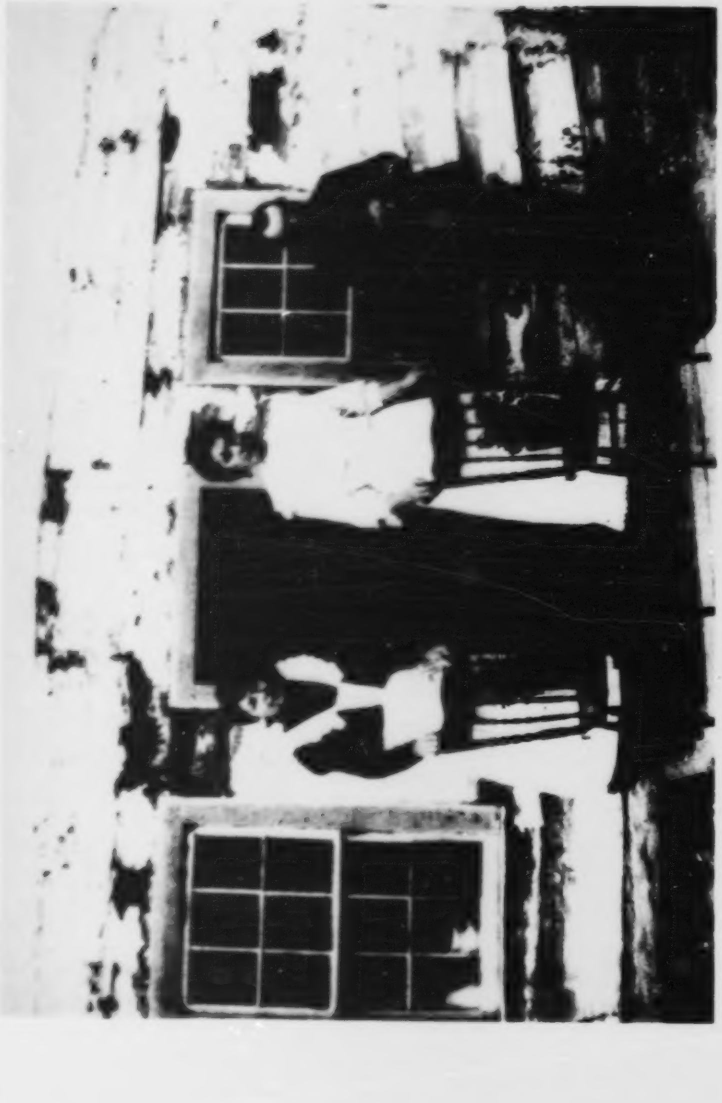


Fig. 12 Antoine Ferguson of St. Laurent, ca. 1910, with his two daughters, Emma (left) and Ernestine. *Saskatchewan Archives Board, Regina, R-A5225.*

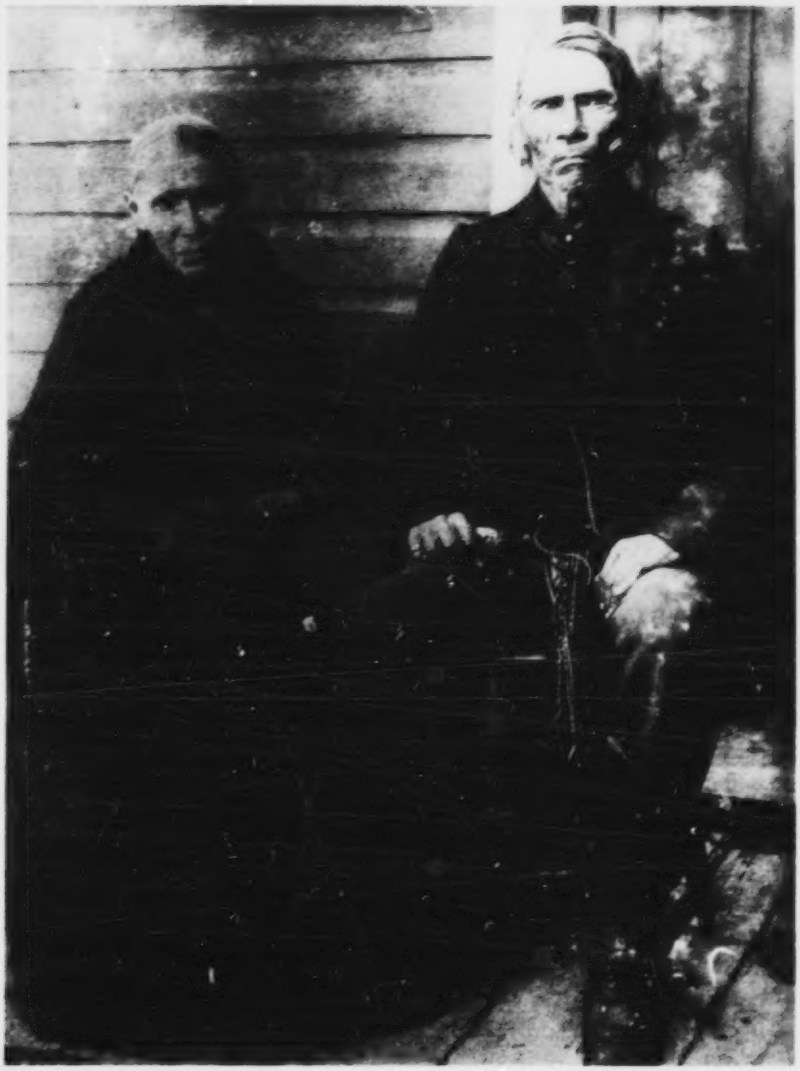


Fig. 13 A Métis couple from the Battleford area. *Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatoon, Cochin Collection.*

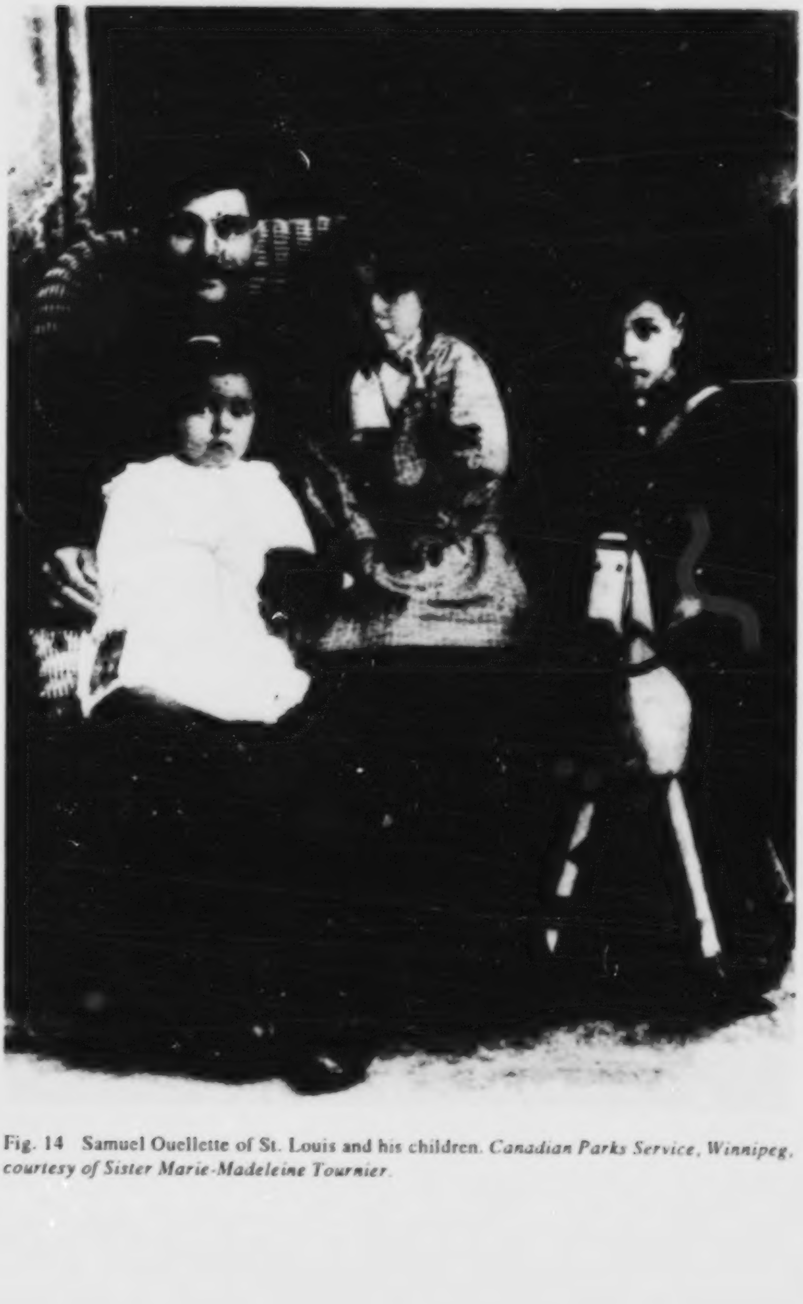


Fig. 14 Samuel Ouellette of St. Louis and his children. *Canadian Parks Service, Winnipeg, courtesy of Sister Marie-Madeleine Tournier.*

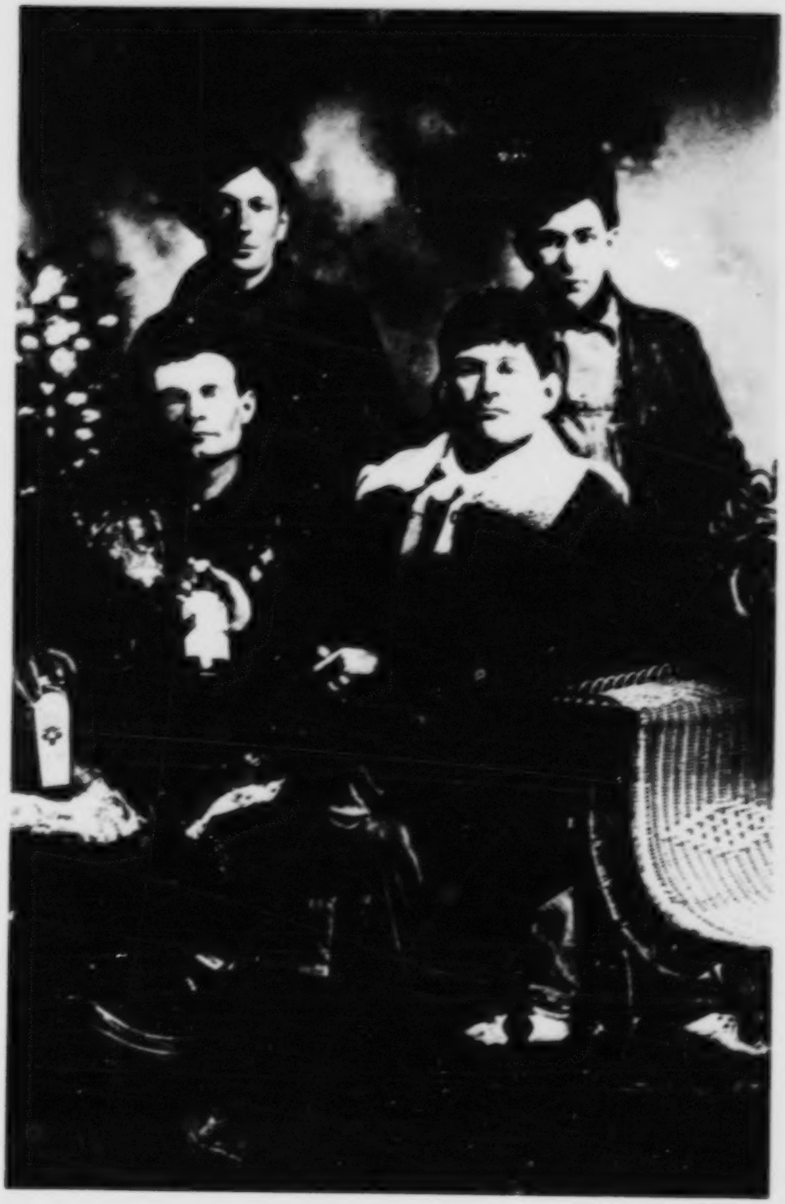


Fig. 15 Young men of Batoche, ca. 1910. Seated Louis Letendre Jr. at left and Alexandre Parenteau; standing Joseph (Canton) Pilon Jr. at left and possibly a Dubois. *Canadian Parks Service, Winnipeg, courtesy of Omer Ranger.*

Fig. 16 Modeste Parenteau and his wife, Christine Caron, ca. 1920s. *Canadian Parks Service, Winnipeg, courtesy of Walter and Marie Fidler.*

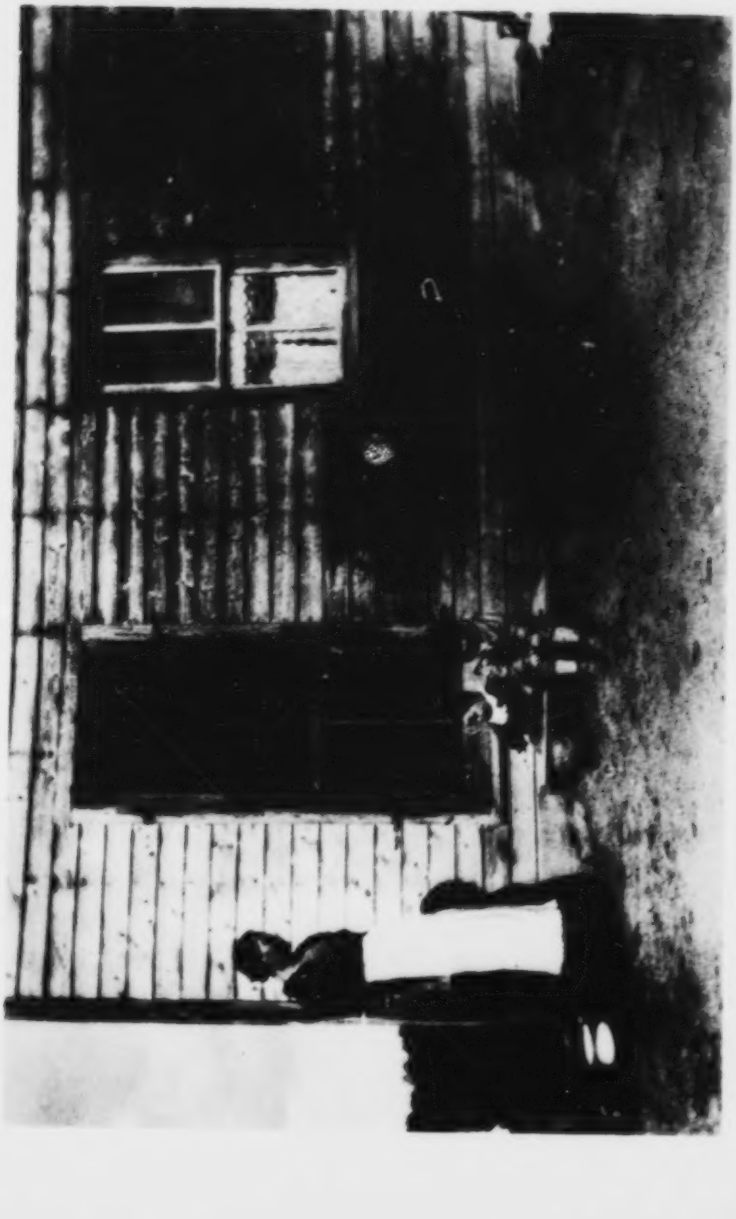


Fig. 17 Adélaide (Pilon) Ranger and her children outside their house, ca. 1920. *Canadian Parks Service, Winnipeg, courtesy of Omer Ranger.*

Fig. 18 The Duck Lake fair in 1891. *University of Saskatchewan Library, Special Collections, Norton Mss. C550/2/3.16.*

II RELATIONS WITH THE CLERGY

THE DICHOTOMY OF SAVAGERY AND CIVILIZATION

There have been a number of studies and several discussions of the relations between the clergy and the Métis, and more specifically, between the "civilized" Eurocanadians and the "savage" or "uncivilized" peoples in the Canadian North-West. In the preface to his *Histoire de l'Église catholique dans l'Ouest canadien, 1659-1905*, Father A.G. Morice gives a kind of summary of the nature and significance of missionary work.

> *In it the historian should be able to find evidence of a remarkable evolution from utter savagery to comparative civilization, with order coming after chaos, and the kind of organization characteristic of a well-ordered society succeeding the most primitive state through which the family of man has passed, while the last parts of it should reveal the most satisfying advances and an almost unprecedented expansion in the sphere of activity of the Catholic Church.*[1] [Translation]

Since the Métis were considered already half-civilized and thus more sensitive to the workings of Christianity, its mores and customs, they were regarded as better able to adopt the religious values of Eurocanadians. In *Le Métis canadien*, Marcel Giraud keeps praising the civilizing mission of the Church and its humanitarian work among the Métis. According to him, the missionaries, especially in their capacity as teachers and preachers, contributed to the rise and growth of the Métis people in Red River.[2]

The Church's missionary work and political action continued until the events of 1869-70, when Bishop Taché and Father Noël-Joseph Ritchot supported the Métis in their representations to the government. Afterwards, other priests continued to support their flock and to protect them against the onslaught of a so-called "higher" civilization foreign to Manitoba. The same "civilizing mission" was pursued in the Métis settlements of the North-West.

In 1842, Father Thibault left St. Boniface to visit the Carlton and Edmonton (Fort des Prairies) posts in the Saskatchewan District. Between 1845 and 1855, missions were established at Lac Ste. Anne, Île à la Crosse and St. Albert, where many French Canadians and Métis spent the winter. These remote missions were opened by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.[3] During the 1850s and 1860s, these permanent missions also served the North Saskatchewan River area. To provide for the education and care of the Métis children of French-Canadian traders in the district, the Sisters of Charity known as Grey Nuns opened a day school and a boarding school at Lac Ste. Anne and St. Albert.[4] Although these institutions were relatively successful, reports by priests and nuns tell us about some of their difficulties. Loneliness and wretchedness were common in these missions, and personality conflicts among priests or nuns hampered some of their work.[5] However, the missionaries usually enjoyed the favour and support of the Métis. Evangelizing and educating "the free people" was a relatively easy task, compared to evangelizing and educating "savages." However, francization met a fair amount of resistance, and the missionaries deplored the fact that after several years of instruction the Métis stubbornly persisted in speaking only Cree.[6] The priests and nuns for their part lacked an understanding of certain Amerindian practices and beliefs which the Métis had incorporated into the Christian religion. For example, some believed in the immortality of the soul and of some "form" of the body and that "the two would go to the happy hunting ground" [translation].[7] Some marriage customs, sacramental practices, ceremonial and other practices inspired by Amerindian cults were condemned by the priests and nuns as "pagan" or "savage."

On the other hand, the missionaries generally showed great devotion and exceptional charity in the missions of the North-West. Most of them tried hard to learn the native language of their congregation.[8] In return, the Métis usually gave them their respect and co-operation. Despite their so-called inconstancy and lack of foresight, Métis pupils were generally a source of special satisfaction to the nuns. These women missionaries were held in high esteem by the Métis populations of Île à la Crosse and St. Albert.[9] Among other things, they helped to improve the economic and social condition of Métis women, who were victims of the prejudices of the time against women of Amerindian descent. However, the intellectual and cultural differences between the "natives of the country" and the missionaries were irreconcilable. The first educational and social contact at Lac Ste. Anne and St. Albert was a limited success. It throws quite a fair amount of light on the clergy's first attempts at integration and on the attitude of the Métis. A missionary nun explains the "problem" in the following words:

> *They [the Métis] started to build small houses and planted a few crops, but as the hunt had always been their favourite way of life, they often abandoned their fields to go hunting in the woods for much of the year ... even though the taste for farming is quite foreign to the Métis character ... we have now succeeded in getting quite a few of them to settle down ....*[10] [Translation]

FIRST CONTACTS: THE "TRAVELLING" MISSIONS

Young Métis usually served as guides to priests and nuns on their way to the missions of the North-West. Father Thibault relates (in 1842):

> *I started from Red River on April 20, having with me a Métis by the name of Jean-Baptiste Laframboise who was to serve me as a guide ... the day before the Lord's Day, we reached the big Gros Ventres fork at about ten o'clock ... we were expecting the shepherds from the Mountain from one day to the next ... while waiting, I kept myself busy instructing the women and children and a few Savages. I did twenty baptisms and blessed two marriages.*[11] [Translation]

The Oblate missionaries of Île à la Crosse, Lac Ste. Anne and Lac Caribou were among the earliest to visit the temporary settlements or winter camps. As early as 1861, Father Valentin Végréville set up a mission dedicated to St. Paul in the vicinity of Fort Carlton. This mission, intended mainly for the Cree who lived in the district, also served the Métis employees at the fort and the "free families," including the McGillis and Pagé families.[12] According to Father Albert Lacombe who regularly visited this mission until 1867, Fort Carlton "is full of people:

French Canadians, Métis, savages, Englishmen .... Let us try to do something for this place ..." [translation].[13] During these years, Fathers Julien Moulin and Alexis André founded several "travelling" missions, that is, they accompanied the Métis on their hunting trips on the prairie and wintered with them. In 1870, Father Moulin wrote:

> *I received the Bishop's order to go to the Gros Ventres Fork, where I am to spend the winter ... new mission ... it seems that there are very many people in this place. They are all Métis from Red River who are thinking of returning there next spring.*[14] [Translation]

During the following years, two other temporary missions, St. Joseph and St. Sacrement, were set up in the vicinity of Fort Carlton. The former did not last long, but the St. Sacrement mission, halfway between Stobart[15] and Fort Carlton, received many visitors from the growing number of Métis who came to settle in the area during the 1870s.

THE PERMANENT MISSIONS

The missionaries were anxious to gather the Métis into settlements, so as to make it easier for them to adopt a sedentary lifestyle and practice the Christian religion, and therefore encouraged the formation of local governments. This was the context within which, in 1873, the inhabitants of the first Métis settlement on the South Saskatchewan (St. Laurent) chose Gabriel Dumont as president of their council and Father André as their spiritual leader.[16] In the beginning, there was close co-operation between missionaries and colonists. In 1874, they began to build a mission church and residence. Father André soon became a little exasperated by the seasonal departure of the Métis to go hunting, the difficulty of assembling the residents to do communal work and the lack of contributions (tithes or donations) to the mission building fund. Deploring his parishioners' lack of enthusiasm, he wrote in 1875:

> *For the hundredth time, they have failed to persevere and have left the work unfinished ... these unfinished institutions [St. Laurent and St. Sacrament], as well as their own houses built here and there on a vague impulse to settle down and then almost immediately abandoned, are so many sad monuments to*

> *the laziness, heedlessness and inconstancy of this Métis tribe who to this day have failed to recognize the devotion of those who look after their material well-being as well as their spiritual interests.*[17] [Translation]

In reality, despite their lack of money and a certain indifference to putting up buildings, the Métis were devoted to and quick to help the missionaries. Father Fourmond, who visited the hunters from St. Laurent on the prairie in August 1876, reported that "a very kind Métis had dislodged his family from his big tent and put them up wretchedly under the carts, in order to leave me as suitable a presbytery as was possible under the circumstances" [translation].[18] At the new St. Eugène mission founded in 1880 near Carlton, Father Végréville was just as lucky. "A kind and very devout Métis laid the foundations of the new church ... built a small chapel at his own expense ..." [translation].[19] Another Métis parish in the area, that of Sacré-Coeur at Duck Lake, founded in 1876, was more fortunate financially. It was lucky enough to find a benefactor and not to have to depend entirely on local initiative and labour. In August 1882, Father Julien Moulin[20] founded the St-Antoine-de-Padoue mission in Batoche. The following summer he was still without a mission and a church, even though he expected to have the largest parish on the south branch of the Saskatchewan. The population of Batoche warmly welcomed Father Moulin, nicknamed Father Caribou, but he had to rely mainly on his own resources to build the presbytery in 1883 and the church in 1884. He later stated that the Métis had given in total exactly what was needed to pay for the foundations of the church.[21] Father Moulin opened a school in the presbytery, and in January 1884 he became postmaster. Progress was slow, and the "troubles" of 1885 interrupted the completion of the work and added to the financial burden. Grappling with their own difficulties, the parishioners were unable to support the mission. They were barely able to pay their tithes, most often in farm products, and for their pews and to do their share of communal work.

In 1887, a new mission was established at a place called Boucher, about 15 miles from St. Laurent, on the east bank of the South Saskatchewan River. Father Lecoq did most of the construction work on the chapel, which he dedicated to Saint Louis.

CULTURE SHOCK

Besides the financial difficulties, other conflicts arose, caused to a large extent by cultural, social and even religious differences between the Métis and the clergy. The priests of the St. Laurent district were the first to recognize the edifying piety of their parishioners and their faithful attendance at services. But the missionaries' code of conduct and their very different education from that of the Métis did not facilitate communication and exchange of ideas between the two groups. In fact, the clergy's objectives generally ran counter to Métis traditions. Among the most severe criticisms levelled against the Métis was their taste for hunting and travelling and their distaste for farming or sedentary occupations — "rather uncivilized and un-Christian tastes" [translation].[22] The missionaries also found them generally stubborn and insouciant, "never finishing what they had started" [translation].[23] In 1876, Father André reported that "the winterers are always tempted by the smell of buffalo and the prospect of an easier life on the prairie ... however, some of the latter have acted wisely and taken plots of land" [translation].[24] The Fathers did not seem to recognize that hunting, fur-trading and "freighting" were basic to the Métis economy and that farming was foreign to their traditional way of life and not very profitable. However, the sandy soil of St. Laurent (in particular) and the many droughts should have acted as a warning against adopting cultivation of the soil as a general practice. Refusing to bow to the evidence, the missionaries persisted in believing that the farmers and merchants or bourgeoisie constituted the best class of people among the Métis,[25] and that it was absolutely necessary to get the "errant" group to adopt European customs and keep them from following the example of those "poor savages."

As for social life, the missionaries deplored the use of alcohol and such recreational activities as playing billiards and dancing. For Father Moulin, "apart from that, they are good souls ... but they cannot help drinking when they see liquor ..." [translation].[26] However, the Métis were also recognized to have certain qualities. They were generous: for example, the staff of the St-Antoine-de-Padoue mission worked diligently and at little cost to help either Father Moulin or the teacher, Miss Dorval.[27] They were also friendly, and their hospitality was proverbial.

For their part, the Métis, though profoundly Christian, regarded these representatives of a distant Church as something like intruders. They gained the respect and confidence of the clergy, and as long as their representations remained peaceful and legitimate,[28] the clergy supported their initiatives and did not interfere with their decisions. On the other hand, they were deeply hurt by the missionaries' general conviction as to the superiority of Eurocanadians and especially by the unfavourable comparisons they drew between the Métis and the French Canadians. They were not the docile sheep of the Good Shepherd, and the missionaries reacted fairly severely to this insubordination.

> *The poor Métis: if they could only understand the charity of the good shepherds who would gather them at any price under their beneficent shepherd's crook, to help them find in the true practice of religion and in a serious hard-working life the happiness they are looking for in vain far from the cross of the mission or the parish church!*[29] [Translation]

The clergy's primary objective was to "civilize and Christianize" the Métis, a policy implying that the people in question were inferior and entailing the imposition of foreign or external mores. This explains at least in part the tension and distrust between the two groups, though in practical or everyday matters the relations were generally more friendly.

The distrust of the Métis of any undertaking initiated by the clergy and their lack of enthusiasm for rigidly structured organizations were also illustrated by the events preceding the founding of the St-Antoine-de-Padoue mission in Batoche between 1881 and 1883. In 1881, Father Végréville was invited to found a mission among the people already settled on the east bank of the river about seven miles from St. Laurent. As in St. Eugène, Sacré-Coeur (known as St. Sacrement) and St. Laurent, the missionary enjoyed at first the inhabitants' financial support and co-operation. The Batoche Métis were also favourably impressed by Father Végréville's more conciliatory attitude, compared to the blunter manners of Father André, the superior.

They also sided with the former in his constant quarrels with his superior. Father André's intransigence compromised the founding of the new parish.[30] The first misunderstanding was about two river-front lots reserved unofficially since 1877 for the planned Batoche mission. Father André reported that a Mr. Sauvé and then Jean Caron[31] were trespassing on the mission lands. In a letter to Mr. Caron, he was unsparing in his words and judgments.

> *As superior I therefore protest against your intention to take this land away from us. We were the first to take possession of this land. I do not want to give up our rights to this land, all the more*

> *so because you will sell the land as soon as you get a chance, and we will have a neighbour who will be an embarrassment to us. If you stick to your claims, you will ruin the mission ... I never gave you this piece of land, and now that I find out that it is beside the mission, I forbid you to go on working this land.*[32] [Translation]

When the land question was finally settled, another difficulty arose: that of raising funds for building a church and a presbytery. On Xavier Letendre's and Gabriel Dumont's initiative, a committee was formed to assemble the materials using communal labour and to receive gifts and pledges for buying and "freighting" items that had to be brought in from the outside. In the meantime, Father Végréville was the guest of Xavier Letendre, who gave him room and board for a year. The building committee's statement of accounts in May 1882 indicated that the logs were in place, that several items had been bought, and that gifts valued at about $55 had also been received.[33]

However, Father Végréville complained about the tiny sum he received from the parish funds and that Father André would not give him his rightful share of the Holy Childhood and Propagation of the Faith allowances. He added that he lacked what he needed for his own support and that he was reduced to begging.[34] When Xavier Letendre "offered to give an additional one hundred dollars on condition that the Bishop give $500" [translation],[35] Bishop Grandin reminded him that setting up a parish was mainly the responsibility of its inhabitants, but nevertheless responded favourably to Letendre's pleas. But he sent the money to Father André, who refused to deposit it directly into the Batoche building fund, either as a precaution or out of resentment against Father Végréville. This kind of behaviour on the part of Father André seemed to be motivated at least partly by the conflict between him and Father Végréville.[36]

However that may be, it had unfortunate consequences for the population of Batoche. Father Végréville reported bitterly to Father André that it had taken much tact and skill to obtain so much participation from the parishioners. "Not everyone wanted to give everything to the church .... In fact, immediately after the reading of your letter [of remonstrance], one of the members of the assembly said: I promised to give such and such a thing, but now I will keep it for myself ..." [translation].[37] For lack of enough money and materials, the church which was to be built in 1882 was built only in 1884 and only thanks to a $2000 loan. The inhabitants also refused to give free room and board to Father

Moulin, Végréville's successor.[38] However, in a report to the Superior-General in 1886, the latter had nothing but praise for his former parishioners.

> *My good Métis were already doing more than they could to build chapels and pay their schoolmasters ... I was most sadly missed in St-Antoine-de-Padoue, which I had to leave in 1882. The population offered me $300, plus $1500 which I was to offer to Bishop Grandin begging him to leave me in their midst even though I had a substitute, and those $300 remained at my disposal until the bad days of 1885.*[39] [Translation]

His successor Father Moulin had to put up with lack of enthusiasm on the part of his rather distrustful parishioners, especially after 1885, and dip into his own funds (teacher's and postmaster's salaries, family money) for the upkeep of the church and presbytery. He lived generally alone, without horse or carriage, and travelled on foot up and down his parish, which extended up to 19 miles all around. "To ask them [the Métis] for money is like tearing out their hearts ... making the rounds of my parish, I collected six dollars, which shows you how much I can count on my Christians" [translation].[40] In 1892, he gave an account of his work to his Superior General:

> *With the money which I receive for my school and which comes from the government ... I was also able to build a tower surmounted by a steeple ... I also built a rood-screen in which to put a harmonium which cost me 750 francs. All the improvements I made in my house did not cost the parish one cent. I no longer receive an allowance. In addition, I have deposited 2500 francs in the Prince Albert bank with Bishop Pascal's consent.*[41] [Translation]

The elected members of the parish council watched the priest's activities and sometimes even went against his decisions.[42] Father Moulin for his part did not hesitate to use religion as a means of intimidation. However, he declared that "despite their faults, my dear Métis give me enough satisfaction" [translation].[43]

EDUCATION

Schools were another subject of dispute between the Métis and the Church. Father Fourmond described the situation in St. Laurent in 1883:

> *Our school, the only one in the district which functions on a regular basis with some government help, is staying afloat only with great difficulty because of the apathy and lack of generosity of our Métis, whom one can never seriously count on when it comes to making sacrifices to found a church or school ... it's sad, but everything has to be done free of charge.*[44] [Translation]

And Father Végréville added: "they feel a kind of distaste for everything that has to do with education" [translation].[45] The Métis wanted to control their schools, even though their efforts to do so had only limited success, in view of their frequent trips, their lack of funds and, generally, their choice of practical rather than academic education.

The "North West Territorial Act" of 1875 granted to the Catholic minority the right to organize separate schools. However, it was only in 1877 that school commissions were authorized to collect taxes in order to subsidize their schools. The first school in St. Laurent, founded in 1875, survived in the beginning exclusively on private funds.

In 1877, the commissioners decided to move the school, which was located in the mission on the west bank, across the river to the east bank where most people lived and to take over its direction. "This school was first given to the mission by the people of St. Laurent and then, at the instigation of Mr. Moïse Ouellette, taken back again and transported to the other bank at public expense because the people wanted to have a school of their own directed by themselves" [translation].[46] For lack of funds, the plans fell through after a year, and Father Fourmond took back the school, which was partly subsidized by the government from 1880 on.

According to the school ordinances for the North-West Territories passed in 1880 and 1884, each school received a subsidy that had to be matched by taxpayers of the school district. The 1884 and 1885 ordinances established an educational system composed of two divisions: Catholic and Protestant, under the direction of an education office. Each division controlled its own schools, whether public or separate. A public school could be either Catholic or Protestant, depending on the religion of the majority of taxpayers in the district. The religious minority, whether Catholic or Protestant, then had the right to form a separate district. The first district formed was always "public" and the second "separate." The Catholic separate school of St. Laurent, founded in 1881, was subsidized. In general, the Métis could not or would not add to the subsidy.

The Tertiaries of Saint Francis, lay people in the service of the North-West missions, took over from the Fathers as teachers in the St. Laurent school until the turn of the century. In addition to teaching, they did house work or various other kinds of work in the Batoche, Duck Lake and Battleford parishes, mostly on a voluntary basis. For two years, between 1883 and 1885, the Faithful Companions of Jesus directed the school and a boarding school in St. Laurent. This religious community had been founded in Brittany and become established in England during the 1870s. Unable to obtain enough nuns from the various Canadian communities, Bishop Grandin appealed to foreign communities. Eight Sisters, four of them bound for St. Laurent and four for Prince Albert, arrived in the fall of 1883. But lack of financial support and enthusiasm obliged them to leave St. Laurent in 1885 and afterwards Prince Albert. According to Father Fourmond:

> *Our good Sisters ... have already worked miracles. Miss Dorval, the pious French Canadian Tertiary who had preceded them, had undoubtedly smoothed the way, but all her devotion had not been strong enough to overcome* all the prejudices against the Sisters. *The beginning was therefore a painful trial period for the latter. Despite our entreaties, the children came to school only rarely if at all ... The Reverend Mothers multiplied their efforts and let the cup of kindness overflow — all to no avail: the children stayed away. Added to* these difficulties born of prejudice and novelty, *there was, for some of them, the difficulty of crossing the Saskatchewan River ... [but] after some painful trials charity was bound to prevail (underlining ours).*[47] [Translation]

From another point of view, the children boarding at the mission helped a lot to earn their keep. It also seems that parents did not look kindly on their children's absence and did not like to see them work as domestics at the mission or be subjected to a very rudimentary school program. Another very interesting factor was that parents asked for instruction to be given also in English, a demand the clergy saw as evidence of lack of conviction about language and faith. The Faithful Companions of Jesus taught English and French during their stay at

St. Laurent. The Métis demands, which ran counter to the clergy's views, reveal some antagonism between the two groups, but they do not show that the Métis were opposed to French as the language of teaching. In 1888, they sent a petition to Regina, demanding that teaching in their schools be in French.

In 1886, the term "confessional" as applied to school districts was revoked in the Territories, and in 1892, the education offices were replaced by a "Council of Public Instruction," two of whose four members were supposed to be Catholics. English became the language of instruction, and French was authorized only at the primary level.[48]

In Batoche, the Catholic public school, officially established in 1884, became the first public school of the "District of Saskatchewan" during the 1887 school reorganization. It received a subsidy of $250 a year. Father Moulin was the teacher from 1882 to 1896. Because people envied him his salary, he was repeatedly in danger of being replaced by a lay teacher.[49] However, it was this income which enabled him to live and meet the needs of the parish.

Miss Onésime Dorval, a lay Tertiary Sister of Saint Francis, took over as a teacher at the Batoche school from 1896 to 1914. Born in Quebec in 1845, she arrived in the West in 1877. She taught successively at Lac Ste. Anne, St. Laurent, Battleford, Batoche, Aldina and finally at the St. Michel school in Duck Lake, where she died in 1932. She was a very devoted teacher, who left long-lasting and very vivid memories in her pupils' minds. During the 18 years she spent in Batoche, Miss Dorval is said to have given almost all her salary to Father Moulin for the upkeep of the parish.

Teachers did not have an easy task in Batoche, nor in the other schools in the area. Being priests or nuns for the most part, they deplored the fact that the children spoke mainly Cree (or Métchif) at home, had little motivation and did not appreciate the value of instruction, even at the primary level. For the Métis, school was a place where others tried to impose Eurocanadian values and ideology on them, without regard to their own culture, their own "universe." According to Father Moulin:

> *They [the Métis] are generally little educated ... most of them do not know how to read .... As most of our Métis and settlers live very far from one another and it is difficult for them to send their children, these children are often miss school and as a result make little progress, especially since we are obliged to teach English and French. Most of these children understand neither the one nor the other.*[50] [Translation]

THE DEMANDS OF 1885

The "troubles" of 1885 gave rise to more agitation, discord and resentment between the clergy and the Métis than any other question. This question has been analysed at length by Father Jules Le Chevallier, OMI, in *Aux prises avec la tourmente; les missionnaires de la colonie de Saint-Laurent-de-Grandin durant l'insurrection métisse de 1885* and in his *Batoche; les missionnaires du Nord-Ouest pendant les troubles de 1885*. According to Father Le Chevallier, the missionaries in 1885 were the hapless victims of mad schemes by the rebellious Métis. The latter, being simple people with little education, were also duped by the declarations and plans of the "infamous" Riel. Without being completely unfair to the Métis, Father Le Chevallier fails to give a critical analysis of the clergy's behaviour and attitude in 1885. He also makes no mention of other testimony by missionaries or Métis which might qualify or even contradict some of his allegations.

Marcel Giroud's interpretation in *Le Métis canadien* is, at least in part, more balanced. According to him, it was inevitable that the clergy would oppose Riel and the armed revolt of the Métis.

> *Their [the clergy's] defence of the principle of authority made them turn away from any alliance with men who did not respect strictly legal tactics .... Finally, they acted out of fear of appearing to favour a movement for which they would be held responsible and of compromising the cause of the Church and the French race with the government.*[51] [Translation]

But Giraud pays little attention to the Métis point of view and considers mainly the negative effect of this split on the "civilization" of the Métis people.

During the years preceding the insurrection, the missionaries' position had been clear and consistent. Since they settled in the district in 1872, the Métis had the support of the clergy, especially in the many petitions they addressed to the government.[52] But the clergy saw themselves as leaders and chief counsellors of the community and, as long as people accepted this rule, there was harmony between the two groups. However, the missionaries tried to stay clear of political struggles. Their real mission was charity, aid to the oppressed and the propagation and maintenance of the Roman Catholic doctrine. However, as they were better educated than most Métis and in touch with the government, they were inevitably led to take part in Métis protests. The fact that the clergy agreed to join the Métis in their "peaceful" demands but shrank back before the prospect of an open war was bound to arouse some animosity towards them. Suspect in the eyes of the Métis, the missionaries were, on the other hand, perceived by the government as being in collusion with them. Their position was indeed difficult. They were caught in the cross-fire.

THE BREAKDOWN

Although most historians state that Riel's arrival set off the conflict, it should be noted that the relations between the clergy and the Métis had been strained since the winter of 1883-84. The missionaries were annoyed at not having been consulted, nor invited to the "secret assemblies" to study various tactics to force the government to act. Riel's arrival in July 1884 aroused some apprehension among the missionaries of the district, but no strong opposition. Riel for his part was distrustful, having learned from his Manitoba experience. According to Louis Schmidt, eyewitness to these events, "Riel did not have much confidence in the clergy ... especially in politics ... because priests by their very nature fawned upon governments .... In Manitoba he accused Bishop Taché of being servile towards the government and then of being partial to French Canadians to the detriment of the poor Métis" [translation].[53] On the other hand, Riel sought not only the tacit approval of the clergy, but their active participation "because, he said, the clergy had a great influence on the people" [translation].[54]

At first, Riel's speeches and objectives were moderate. But the missionaries seemed uncomfortable with his hold over the Métis and perhaps even jealous of it. According to Father Fourmond:

> *Notwithstanding his nice protestations, he repeatedly found himself in opposition to the clergy, and it repeatedly happened that he did not show them enough respect in his public speeches. But when we called him to order, he always accepted our reprimands and counsel with submission and humility, protesting always that he was working above all for the glory of God and would use only peaceful and legal means to demand the rights of his nation.*[55] [Translation]

In August, Father André, superior of the St. Laurent district, met Riel at the home of Xavier Letendre dit Batoche. Riel explained to him the idea of a distinct nationality for the Métis and maintained that he had a special divine mission to fulfil. In September, there were several meetings between the Métis and Bishop Grandin in St. Laurent and Batoche. Despite frictions and raw nerves, they succeeded, at least theoretically, in renewing the ties between the two communities. Bishop Grandin, who had reiterated the Métis grievances in his latest request to the federal government in June,[56] was troubled by the tone of the exchanges between the Métis and the priests in the district. But he responded favourably to the Métis demand to adopt St. Joseph as the national patron saint. This was an important moral victory for Riel in the eyes of the Métis, who said: "he made the Bishop give in, so he must be right" [translation].[57]

However, during the winter the situation deteriorated rapidly. According to Father André, in December 1884 "Riel began to rave" [translation].[58] And Father Végréville reported that during a conversation

> *Riel flew into a rage against the head of government and against spiritual authority ... I was seething with impatience, but this was not the time to reply, since I was all alone in the midst of a frenzied crowd determined not to listen to reason.*[59] [Translation]

At about this time, Riel told the clergy about his "mission" and his plans for religious and political reform. He claimed to be sent by God to restore the Métis nation to grandeur and reform the Church, thereby challenging the supremacy of the pope and the infallibility of the Church. Father Végréville interpreted Riel's designs as follows: "to found an independent nation of which Louis Riel would be the absolute monarch with its own religion of which he would be the supreme pontiff ..." [translation].[60] It was clear to the clergy that Riel was an apostate and a heretic. They did not quite know how to take him, but recognized a dangerous spirit in him. Opinions differed on his state of mind and the real meaning of his actions. According to Father Fourmond, who was at first more sympathetic than his fellow priests, "his lapses in conversation and his fits of anger were attributed to past moral sufferings and misfortunes" [translation].[61]

However, Riel remained very pious and fervent. He regularly attended services, which earned him even more respect and devotion from the Métis. "Our people ... in their simplicity, seeing this singular person and a Métis like them pray almost day and night ... had a blind confidence in him and took him for a saint" [translation].[62] Unable to reconcile Riel's "heretical statements" with his essentially religious behaviour, the clergy concluded that he was putting on an act and wore "the mask of the most refined hypocrisy" [translation].[63] Jealous of his ascendancy over the Métis, offended by his refusal to submit to their authority and apprehensive about the future, the missionaries now put up a strong opposition to Riel and the "ringleaders" Gabriel Dumont, Maxime Lépine and Charles Nolin.[64]

Father André was in touch with the North-West Mounted Police and with D.H. Macdowall, territorial representative for the Lorne district (which included Batoche and St. Laurent) to obtain Riel's "departure." These little schemes, which were unknown to most Métis but only came out little by little, aroused much anxiety. Riel's adversaries maintained that he was looking for an indemnity or political appointment and that he was ready to sacrifice the interests of his people to his own pride and ambition.[65] It was true that during the winter of 1884-85 Riel was thinking of returning to Montana. He was poor,[66] the government had several accounts to settle with him, and he saw an opportunity to negotiate his departure. A more probable explanation was that Riel knew what game the authorities were playing and wanted to take advantage of it. Moreover, Father André's ambivalent behaviour increased his distrust of the clergy and strengthened his conviction that the Father had "sold out to the government."

An assembly organized by Riel in St-Antoine on 24 February 1885 and attended by Fathers Fourmond, Moulin and Végréville confirmed the split between the Métis and the clergy. Riel advocated abandoning peaceful means because they were ineffective. But in March he was still generally respectful of the priests. Father Fourmond then made a last attempt at reconciliation. He organized a public novena and agreed to baptize Riel's secretary William Henry Jackson. He was censured by Father André.

> *I blame the good Father Fourmond for letting himself be influenced by Riel. The latter was continually at the mission, entertaining the good Father with his religious and political plans. He completely dominated Father Fourmond, who tolerated things of which I strongly disapprove.*[67] [Translation]

Fathers Végréville and Fourmond summed up the general attitude towards the clergy in the spring as follows:

> *The people ... regard him [Riel] as a saint or victim of persecution and us as ancient Roman slaves unable to understand the great and infallible insights of* His Spirit *[underlining in original], as people who have sold out to the government, as traitors and as enemies of our people ... It was not a good idea to treat it as a laughing matter or tell them the truth too bluntly ... We were made to feel unwelcome when we offered even the slightest criticism of his words or deeds.*[68] [Translation]

The Métis population was somewhat divided[69] in their feelings about the clergy, but nobody felt comfortable faced with the threat of being refused the sacraments. In fact, this was the clergy's position if the population rose up against "established" society or abandoned the "proper" means. On 18 and 19 March, the Métis took up arms, established the "little provisional" government and occupied the church and presbytery in Batoche. The split between the clergy and the Métis was now complete.

Deprived of religious support, the Métis built their own sanctuary and maintained a fervent religious practice. According to an account by Father Fourmond himself:

> *Riel had made a small chapel in a second-floor room of Jean-Baptiste Boyer's home. People met daily in this 20 by 25 foot room to pray. The religious services had been moved to that room after being held for a few days upstairs in the empty Batoche store .... To sanctify this profane place, they had, on the Exovedat's [provisional council] orders, placed at one end of the room a big picture of Our Lady of Lourdes representing Bernadette at the Virgin's feet. Above the picture, they had attached a Christ without the cross, the kind people carried into battle. Below and to one side, there was, attached by a brooch, the benediction which Lord Bishop Grandin of St. Albert had given to all the Métis at Riel's invitation during the big assembly in September. On the other side was a letter ... written to Riel by Bishop Bourget of Montreal. Riel treasured this letter, read it to everyone and based his mission on it: "you have a mission to fulfil" .... To get back to the service in that improvised chapel, it must be said that the soldiers and partisans of the New Church came to pray there morning and evening and very often during the day and even, during the battle, all the time that there was fighting going on. It was even said that some young girls carried*

> *their zeal for their new religion so far as to sing hymns before the picture of the Virgin .... On the right [west] bank of the river, there was no chapel to the new cult. The image of Our Lady of Lourdes had been attached to an old aspen near the camp, and at any hour of the day, people came there with a rosary in their hands to pray in turn to the Holy Mother to have pity on her children and protect them in their present danger.*[70] [Translation]

During the troubles, between 26 March and 12 May, the missionaries of the district were being watched and even held and prevented from moving freely. Even though Fathers Le Chevallier and Morice[71] accuse the Métis of imprisoning the priests, it seems more correct to say that they kept them under surveillance. Fathers Végréville, Moulin, Fourmond and Touze were together in the presbytery during the Battle of Batoche, from 9 to 12 May. On the other hand, their behaviour during the fighting was not altogether neutral. It is difficult to judge whether it was mainly resentment or fear that led them to foster the divisions between the Métis and to scheme with the agents of the government. According to the Métis, on the one hand they could not trust the priests who had withdrawn all religious support from them, and on the other hand they could not guarantee the priests' safety in case of an Indian attack if they did not watch over them.[72]

The four Faithful Companions of Jesus from St. Laurent, who had been brought to Batoche on 17 April, testified to the high regard and tactfulness of the Métis towards them.

> *... the Métis leader said that he had the highest regard for us, that he wanted nothing better than to protect us, but that this would be difficult if not impossible from then on if we did not move closer to his camp ... advised us to go there [St. Antoine] as soon as possible if we could and, above all,* if we wanted to [underlining ours] *... Aleck [sic] Fisher ... offered us his house for the night ... they sent us cooked meat and milk ... On Riel's order, the men led us to the most beautiful house in the place, that of Mr. Batoche ... The Dumont woman [wife of Gabriel] served us as best she could ... Riel came to see us ... Mother Mary pointed out to him ... could we not retire ... to the St-Antoine mission ... Riel replied that he perfectly understood our wishes, that we would be perfectly safe at the mission and that he wanted nothing better than to see us there.*[73] [Translation]

CLERICAL INTERVENTION

On 9 May, the Canadian soldiers began by attacking the St-Antoine-de-Padoue mission, located about a mile upstream from Batoche village.[74] The presbytery and church were riddled with bullets, and when Father Moulin saw the machine gun aimed at his house, he came out with a white flag.

> *When they saw me, they said that we had nothing to fear. The general advanced with his staff and shook our hands.* After gathering some information [underlining ours], *they moved towards the Métis who were in their holes.*[75] [Translation]

There is no denying that the missionaries exchanged information with General Middleton and the Canadian army. Father Moulin admits that he was willing to pay any price to save his mission which had cost him so dearly.[76] The same day, the wounded soldiers were transported to the church, where the nuns gave them first aid. "According to Father Moulin's wishes, we gave quite a few soldiers something to eat" [translation].[77] In the evening, when the soldiers retreated, the Métis and particularly Dumont reproached the priest and nuns. Under the circumstances, it was very difficult if not impossible for the missionaries to remain impartial. However, they did not have to feed the soldiers, nor care for them, nor exchange information with them.

Two days later, Father Moulin received "a stray bullet in his thigh as he was looking for something he needed in the attic of the house" [translation].[78] Some authors[79] have tried to attribute this act to some Métis looking for vengeance. However, none of the priests or nuns who witnessed the accident supported this charge. Once again they called on the soldiers, who came to get Father Moulin "to transport me to the camp. The surgeon bandaged the wound. I stayed until Wednesday (13 May, the day after the battle)" [translation].[80]

The true nature and consequences of the exchanges between missionaries and Canadian soldiers are shrouded in ambiguity, but some of Father Végréville's words in particular suggest that the soldiers received information on the number and quality of the Métis defences. Shortly after the end of the engagement he declared: "it seems pretty obvious to many people here that the lives of eighty Métis and two hundred government soldiers were spared due to my mediation and advice" [translation].[81] It seems that the Fathers acted above all out of fear for the Métis, as well as out of pity. They evidently feared that the population would be annihilated and wanted to avoid such a tragedy.

On the other hand, despite their refusal to administer the sacraments to the insurgents while they were carrying arms, the missionaries did not refuse religious burials to the Métis who died in the battles of Duck Lake, Tourond Coulee and Batoche. The victims were buried in St. Laurent and Batoche.

After the engagements, the clergy's intervention was sometimes good and sometimes bad for the Métis. The Oblates acted as intermediaries between the defeated Métis and General Middleton. Father Végréville reassured the people that the Canadian soldiers were well-intentioned and transmitted the general's message to the effect that "those who returned home would not be arrested, nor bothered by the troops" [translation].[82] This was not the case. Many arrests followed, even among those who had not taken up arms.

The missionaries then made an about-turn or almost: their resentment towards Riel did not diminish quickly, but their attitude towards the insurgents changed.

> *Our poor Métis have shown a degree of bravery and skill of which we did not think them capable ... by way of excusing our poor people, it must be said that they did not intend to spill a drop of blood or to start shooting, no matter how serious the provocation.*[83] [Translation]

Indignant at the conduct of the Canadian soldiers who burnt and robbed mercilessly even after the battle was over, Father André exposed these injustices in the newspapers and did not hesitate to criticize the government.[84]

The missionaries even came to the defence of the Métis. For them, the only real guilty ones were Riel and a few "ringleaders," and only they should feel the rigor of the law. But little by little, as Riel's trial was proceeding in Regina and Riel renounced his "heresies," the Fathers became reconciled with him. While Father André, his spiritual director, admitted that Riel was still convinced of his "mission," he changed his mind about the sincerity of his commitment and his actions.

> *Riel is in several respects one of those remarkable men, but a little cracked in matters of religion and politics ... now that I see him I am persuaded that he does not play the fool or hypocrite ... he is convinced that the divine spirit tells him all its secrets,*

> *and he regards himself as a prophet who has been given a special mission to fulfil .... The poor boy inspires much compassion in me and deserves the interest being taken in him.*[85]
> [Translation]

In Batoche on the other hand, the Métis continued to distrust their missionaries. Father Moulin felt much sympathy for his parishioners and succeeded in making peace with some of them, but never totally regained the confidence of his people. He confessed to his superior:

> *The unfortunate Riel who paid for his rebellion and apostasy with his head has done much harm among our Métis, who no longer have the same confidence in us they once had. Some of them have still not gone to confession since the rebellion.*[86]
> [Translation]

RELATIONS AFTER 1885

The clergy were careful not to intervene in political questions after 1885. Consequently, when Lawrence Clarke, the former territorial representative (1881-83) and benefactor of the missions, asked Bishop Grandin to intervene personally during the federal election campaign of 1886, the latter refused. Clarke and the Conservatives had been particularly hurt by Liberal Philippe Garnot's statements attacking the government and asked Bishop Grandin to get Quebec Conservatives to demand a public retraction: "A letter of this kind signed now by the Métis would have immense weight and would be gratefully remembered by the Government and would benefit the Halfbreeds materially."[87] Bishop Grandin declared that he did not want to compromise the interests of religion and the Métis. His reply also revealed the deep anxiety and the delicate position of the clergy following the events of 1885.

> *... I do not think that I should do it: it would be to intervene in an issue which is too exclusively political .... Privately I am a Conservative, but as a Bishop I am nothing. However, I could see myself more specifically sponsoring whichever party would give us more freedom and show us more sympathy, but I confess that nowadays I am wondering which one of the two is better for*

> *us .... As you know, these poor people are set and biased against us, and the mere fact of intervening in this issue would be enough to arouse their distrust.*[88] [Translation]

But within the parish and in everyday life, relations were generally more harmonious. Instead to shrinking, the St-Antoine-de-Padoue parish expanded after 1885. In 1889, Father Moulin reported that his "big parish extends to more than 30 to 40 kilometres" [translation].[89] He also had a church that "is one of the most beautiful in the country" [translation].[90] During the following years, a school was built in Batoche, and the missionary added an annex to his presbytery. Brother Célestin Guillet, who stayed in Batoche in 1895-96 and in 1900, testified to the rapid expansion of the parish despite the generally lukewarm attitude of the Métis towards their religious duties.[91]

The parishes of Duck Lake and St. Louis continued to grow after 1900. They had the advantage of local teaching nuns and resident priests. In Batoche on the other hand, Father Moulin's departure in 1914 marked the end of a period of continuity and stability for the parish. The years 1915-24 were transitional ones. The Oblates of Mary Immaculate turned over the parish to secular priests, and as the diocese of Prince Albert had a shortage of priests, the parish was reduced to only occasional visits. The situation improved a little in 1924, when there was again a resident priest in St-Antoine. Fathers Belleau and Laplante, who spent some time in Batoche between 1924 and 1926, were well liked by their parishioners. But their youth and lack of experience made them do things which earned them reprimands from their Bishop J.H. Prud'homme.[92] On the other hand, they became well integrated into the community. Being sociable, artistic and, in a sense, "freethinkers," they won the friendship and cooperation of most parishioners. The parish councillors, in particular Barthélémi Pilon and Pierre Caron, had promised to pay off the parish's debt. This was an act which earned them, according to Father Brodeur (administrator of the diocese), "a favour you have wanted for so long: to have a priest among you specially charged with all your interests. He will be for you the missionary of the old days, who will find among you the fidelity and devotion of the first inhabitants of the country" [translation]![93] The parishioners also promised to renovate the presbytery. But Father Laplante's departure, due mainly to lack of financial support and to dissensions among the parishioners, was followed by a request in his favour:

> *... the people, they are all for Father Laplante ... Father Laplante told us: I leave my suitcases and I hope to be back. This is why we are working so hard to have him ... we would like to have him for our bazaar. If you want, we will give $1200 dollars a year. He is so likable, so charming to us and he shows us how to live. But the Batoche parish, we do our duty. It's not our fault ... and people are very unhappy.*[94] [Translation]

The entreaties and promises of financial and moral support did not bring Father Laplante back. But it gave parishioners respite, though not without remonstrances on the part of the diocesan administration. The next priest, Father Belleau, was recalled after one year, and the appointment of Father Pierre Myre was received with apprehension. The parish council sent a memorandum to the Bishop:

> *Up to now, we have got along well with Father Belleau, and the whole parish is sorry to learn that he will soon leave us. As for Father Myre, we have known him for a long time, and we can say without fear of contradiction that he is very difficult to get along with, he would like to manage everything, the finances, in his own way. He is very unpopular .... Many parishioners ... have told us that if Father Myre came to Batoche, that they would not pay their tithes and give nothing for the church ... [however] with a priest who has a little patience and tact, the parishioners would continue to make efforts and even sacrifices to have a priest among them ....*[95] [Translation]

Father Myre, a priest-colonizer who had been a parish priest in Marcelin and then in Bellevue, was an enterprising and generous man, but had a fiery temperament. Authoritarian and quick-tempered, he was rather blunt and sometimes rude. He also entertained some prejudices against the Métis, whom he regarded as degenerates, drunkards, sluggards and liars.[96] The Métis for their part reacted strongly, wounded and deeply hurt by his frequently abusive words and his disdainful attitude. They did not accept this stranger (a French-Canadian secular priest), and some evoked the memory of "dear Father Moulin." Many heads of family signed a petition demanding that Father Myre be recalled.[97] Indignant but greatly impressed, Father Myre recognized his "frank" and rather severe manner. But he claimed that not all of the 51 signatories had signed of their own free will. "Your Grace, there are good people here: they are with me; as for the others, I try to do them some good" [translation].[98] He added that he knew the little schemes of the Métis: "They are liars, and yet I like them and they interest me; they are so shrewd, and their latest exploit was cleverly staged. ..." [translation].[99] He concluded by saying that "Father Moulin has not taught them to give" [translation] and that the parish has been controlled by a "clique of ringleaders" for 45 years. According to him, it was mainly these people with their relatives and friends who were asking for his resignation out of vengeance.

From a careful reading of the correspondence between Father Myre and Bishop Prud'homme it seems obvious that there were mistakes and errors on both sides. At the time, the Métis community in Batoche was in the midst of a social crisis. Several heads of family ended up destitute, became discouraged and abandoned their land. Others sought refuge in alcohol or acted in ways contrary to the sense of honour and integrity of their ancestors. But Father Myre did not seem to understand the profound disarray that drove some to crime and drink. He attributed their behaviour to their predominantly "savage" character: "The savage is shrewd and cunning, and the Métis has more of the traits of the savage than of the white man" [translation].[100] According to Father Myre, several families asking for financial aid "were well off for Métis" [translation].[101] Finally, he was convinced that "their loss" could only be avoided by attracting a fair number of French Canadians. This way of thinking hurt the Métis deeply. The unfavourable comparison with their French-Canadian compatriots increased the resentment between the two groups. In addition, Father Myre started a personal colonization campaign in Batoche and vicinity. He bought more than 1600 acres of land on which he hoped to settle French Canadian and "good" Métis families, in order to "save" Batoche, for "the foreigner if not the enemy [the Ukrainians, the Protestants] will grab this promised land" [translation].[102] Despite his intransigence and his prejudices regarding the Métis (which he shared with most of his contemporaries), Father Myre nevertheless claimed to like them.[103]

During the later years of his Batoche ministry, from 1927 to 1932, the relations improved. Father Myre collected enough funds to repair the church, and the parish was free of debt.[104] According to a former parishioner: "He was hard on us, he was fierce, that one, but he was all right" [translation].[105]

Father Myre was especially preoccupied with the "cause" of French in the West. He became the co-founder and one of the main shareholders of the Duck Lake weekly, *Le Patriote de l'Ouest*. He also carried on a regular campaign in favour of the teaching of French and the creation of cultural and financial organizations to meet the needs of the Francophone community. A convention to this effect was held in Batoche in 1929.[106]

Despite the antipathy and distrust characterizing the relations between Father Myre and the Métis in the beginning, his stewardship seems to have stimulated the religious, economic, cultural and social activity of the parish. When he left for reasons of illness in 1932, his successor Father Robert (1932-36) inherited a well-organized and relatively united parish. The latter enjoyed being in Batoche and remarked "that in general the people are very respectful and very charitable towards the priest" [translation].[107]

During the following years, there was often friction between the clergy and the Métis. The latter, always demanding and vigilant, did not accept the unilateral approach sometimes taken by certain priests. Moreover, their interventions were sometimes malicious and exaggerated.

On the part of the clergy, it is important to emphasize that despite their prejudices and paternalism, they were often the only ones to support the Métis before governmental or other outside agencies. One example of this was the monument erected in Batoche by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 1925 to commemorate the 1885 "rebellion." Bishop Prud'homme of Prince Albert personally intervened when the Board put up a plaque offensive to the Métis.[108] He had donated a plot of land belonging to the episcopal corporation with the assurance that the inscription would be "suitable." But shortly before the unveiling on 10 July 1925, he learned that the inscription commemorated exclusively the victory of the Canadian expeditionary corps over the "rebels." Worse still, it insulted the Métis at home. Even though the Board was slow to modify the text and to produce a French version of it, the clergy on this occasion earned the praise and gratitude of the Union Nationale Métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba.[109]

This harmony continued during the following years, but the tensions of the past did not disappear entirely. It did not take much to arouse ancient susceptibilities and revive the discord.

Notes

Relations with the Clergy

1 Adrien-Gabriel Morice, *Histoire de l'Église catholique dans l'Ouest canadien, 1659-1905* (Winnipeg: published by the author, 1912), Vol. 2, p. xiii.

2 Marcel Giraud, *Le Métis canadien* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1945), pp. 693-726.

3 The Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a community founded in France in 1816, established themselves in Quebec in 1842. In 1845, they sent two missionaries to St. Boniface: Fathers Taché and Aubert. In less than 10 years, the Oblates set up a chain of missions in the Saskatchewan, Athabaska and Mackenzie areas.

4 In 1863, the Lac Ste-Anne mission was moved to St. Albert, a more favourable location for the institution.

5 One example was the conflict between between Fathers Caër and Rémas and Father Lacombe in St. Albert in the early 1860s. Father Moulin, director at Île à la Crosse (1863-64 and 1868-70), also had difficulties with other priests and nuns because of his so-called "meanness."

6 Fathers Rémas and Moulin at Ile à la Crosse during the 1860s stated that aboriginal languages were in danger. The official position of the clergy, as contained in the directives of Bishops Taché and Grandin, was to francize or teach only in French; ASSB, Taché Papers, Letters of Fathers André, Fourmond, Lacombe, Lestanc, Moulin and Végréville, 1868-70 (hereafter Letters of the Fathers), Father Moulin to Bishop Taché, 10 January 1868.

7 Testimony of Mr. Isidore Ledoux (1874-1976), Prince Albert, 8 September 1976. Born in Batoche, Mr. Ledoux was a young messenger in the battle of 1885. (He was the son of Joseph Ledoux and Isabelle Bélanger.)

8 From 1880 on, several Grey Nuns of Amerindian or Métis descent also worked in these missions, which made it much easier for them to become integrated and accepted by the pupils. There were, for example, Sister Sara Riel at Île à la Crosse and Sister Marie-Anne Goulet at Qu'Appelle (Lebret).

9 Most missionaries testified to their boundless devotion. The correspondence of the chief officers or bourgeois of the Hudson's Bay Company at Île à la Crosse, Fort Edmonton and Fort Pitt also testifies to the Grey Nuns' excellence as teachers and educators.

10 GNMA, St. Albert Collection, Sister Alphonse to her Superior General, "Historique de St-Albert," n.d., pp. 3-4.

11 SBAA, Provencher Papers, transcription, Father J.-B. Thibault to the Bishop of Québec, 18 June 1843, pp. 1805-1808.

12 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father Lacombe to Bishop Taché, St-Paul-des-Cris Mission, Saskatchewan, 1866; ibid., Carlton, 3 July 1867.

13 Ibid., Carlton, 7 August 1862.

14 Ibid., Father Moulin to Bishop Taché, Gros Ventres Fork, Saskatchewan River, 8 November 1870. Father Moulin was probably at the "Petite Ville" camp or perhaps further north in the vicinity of the future St-Laurent-de-Grandin mission.

15 Stobart is located northeast of the present village of Duck Lake at the site of the Stobart, Eden & Sons store, established in 1875. This English firm had its head office in Winnipeg.

16 Unfortunately, difficulties with the local authorities (Hudson's Bay Company and North West Mounted Police) soon put an end to these missionary initiatives.

17 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1875 [Father André].

18 DA, Letters of the Fathers to the Sisters of Visitation of Le Mans (hereafter Le Mans), Father Fourmond, 7 January 1876.

19 Ibid., 17 August 1880.

20 Born at La Gouesnière, Brittany, in 1830, he arrived in St. Boniface in 1858. During the following years, he served among other things as a missionary at Île à la Crosse and Lac Caribou, founded the Lac Vert (Green Lake) mission, and was finally sent to Batoche in 1882. He stayed there until his retirement in 1914. Father Moulin, nicknamed Farther Caribou by the Métis, repeatedly accompanied the hunters on the prairie. He died in St. Albert in 1920.

21 PADA, Correspondence of Father Pierre E. Myre, Father Myre to Bishop Prud'homme, 30 November 1927.

22 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1875 [Father André].

23 Ibid., 1877.

24 Ibid., 1876.

25 As models of "adaptation," they cite Moïse Ouellette and Isidore Dumont Sr., skilful professional farmers, the minor government officials Louis Schmidt and Charles Nolin, and the merchants Xavier Letendre, Jean-Baptiste Boyer and Salomon Venne.

26 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father Moulin to Bishop Taché, 4 July 1883.

27 In his journal, preserved in PAA, OMI, Brother Célestin Guillet, Father Moulin's assistant in Batoche in 1895-96 and again in 1900, testifies to the missionary's kindness but also stinginess and impatience with his staff. The Brother adds that the children boarding at the mission had to help Miss Dorval and Father Moulin with domestic work.

28 See ch. 4, "The Economy," for a detailed discussion of this question.

29 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1874 [Father André].

30 Ibid., 1875.

31 Ibid.; Jean Caron, one of the first inhabitants of the district, settled in St. Laurent in 1879 and then occupied lot 52, the land adjoining the mission, in 1881. He wanted lot 51 for his eldest son. He finally reached an understanding with Father André to take lot 53 instead.

32 PAA, OMI, Correspondence of Father André, Father André to Jean Caron, 21 July 1882.

33 PAA, OMI, Correspondence of Father Végréville, Father Végréville to Father André, 26 May 1882.

34 DA, Letters of Fathers André, Fourmond, Moulin and Végréville to the Superior-General in Rome, 1878-1900 (hereafter Rome), Father Végréville, 16 May 1886; ibid., 3 November 1893. He also complained that his letters to Bishop Grandin were intercepted and that he and Father Touze were generally ill-treated by Fathers André and Fourmond.

35 PAA, OMI, Correspondence of Father Végréville, Father Végréville to Father André, 6 May 1882.

36 As superior, Father André was in charge of financial management, but it is obvious that in this instance he acted against the directives of Bishop Grandin, who had supported the appointment of a parish council in Batoche to receive and manage the construction funds.

37 PAA, OMI, Correspondence of Father Végréville, Father Végréville to Father André, St-Antoine-de-Padoue, 26 May 1882.

38 DA, Rome, Father Moulin, 31 March 1883.

39 Ibid., Father Végréville, 16 May 1886.

40 EAA, Letters of Bishop V.J. Grandin to Father J. Moulin, Bishop Grandin to Father Moulin, 1 October 1883; DA, Rome, Father Moulin, 30 April 1884.

41 DA, Rome, Father Moulin, 30 November 1892.

42 Brother Guillet reports that Father Moulin had for a long time been hoping to visit his family in France, a hope he realized only in 1899: "He has told me already many a time that the councillors have prevented him from going to France ..." [translation]; PAA, OMI, Journal of Brother Célestin Guillet, 23 April 1895.

43 DA, Rome, Father Moulin, 8 February 1896.

44 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father Fourmond to Bishop Taché, 30 July 1883.

45 DA, Letters of Father Végréville, Father Végréville to Father Antoine Rey, Assistant-General, 16 December 1867.

46 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1877 [Father André].

47 *Missions des Oblats de Marie-Immaculée*, 1885, Father Fourmond's account, 26 December 1885, p. 197.

48 *The Consolidated Ordinances of the North West Territories of Canada, Being a Consolidation of the Revised Ordinances of the Territories, 1888, with the subsequent Public General Ordinances* (Regina: Queen's Printer, 1899), ch. 75, nos. 3, 36-38, 110, 709, pp. 684-757.

49 Testimony of Brother C. Guillet in his journal; for example, "It is being rumoured that Mr. Batoche's son John will take over the school" [translation] (PAA, OMI, Journal of Brother Célestin Guillet, 9 March 1885).

50 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father Moulin to Bishop Taché, 31 December 1897.

51 Marcel Giraud, op. cit., p. 1203.

52 Between 1881 and 1884, at least seven petitions were sent to the federal and territorial governments with the support of the Fathers in the district. When the Métis became more insistent in the winter of 1884-85, the clergy adopted a defensive position. For more details on these petitions, see ch. 3 below, "Political Action."

53 SBAA, Taché Papers, Louis Schmidt, "Mouvement des Métis à Saint-Laurent, Saskatchewan, Territoires du Nord-Ouest, en 1884," Events of 1885, p. 29793.

54 Loc. cit.

55 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1885 [Father Fourmond].

56 NA, MG26, A, Vol. 105, Bishop Grandin to Macdonald, 13 June 1884.

57 SBAA, Louis Schmidt, "Mouvements des Métis à Saint-Laurent ... en 1884," p. 29798.

58 SBAA, Taché Papers, "Notes d'un Père de Prince-Albert" [Father André], 1880 to March 1885, 12 December 1884.

59 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father Végréville to Bishop Taché, 6 December 1884.

60 Loc. cit.

61 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1885 [Father Fourmond].

62 DA, Le Mans, Father Fourmond to Mother Gertrude, 15 June 1885.

63 Loc. cit.

64 Charles Nolin (1836-1907), former representative and minister of agriculture in Manitoba, was settled in St-Laurent-de-Grandin since 1882. A partisan of Riel and the use of arms in early 1885, he suddenly changed positions after the so-called miraculous recovery of his wife Rosalie Lépine. He fled to Prince Albert during the Battle of Duck Lake and later agreed to act as a witness for the Crown. This latter act especially aroused much emotion in the community. He was called a "turncoat" and "terrible." According to Louis Schmidt (SBAA, Taché Papers, "Mouvement des Métis à Saint-Laurent ... en 1884," p. 29796), that "big and fine talker" loved intrigue and action as long as it did not compromise him. On the other hand, he seems to have acted out of fear and without premeditation.

65 The informers included Fathers André and Végréville, and they were joined by Louis Schmidt of Prince Albert and his secretary in 1869-70.

66 Riel stayed with his friends, first at Moïse Ouellette's, then at Charles Nolin's and finally in the former St. Laurent school house on the right bank. According to Philippe Garnot's testimony: "There was no furniture, only a borrowed stove, their beds and [sic] slept on the floor. During the day he often came to see Father Fourmond, often ate with him, and was content to drink milk. The Mothers [Faithful Companions of Jesus] let him have as much milk as he wanted. In the evening, he said very long prayers ... Tables, chairs (2 or 3). Poorly dressed children. One day (in the fall) [1884], Baptiste Boyer gave him some clothes. About a month before the insurrection, people collected money for him. They made a nicely embroidered purse, and Baptiste Boyer gave a banquet for him" [translation]. SBAA, Journal of Father Gabriel Cloutier, 1886, p. 5264.

67 Ibid., Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father André to the Bishop [Grandin], 2 March 1885.

68 Ibid., Father Végréville to the Superior-General, 11 May 1885; PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1885 [Father Fourmond].

69 Not everyone embraced Riel's religious ideas. Some were more or less "pressed" into taking up arms and joining the "revolutionaries." Out of about 300 men who took up arms, perhaps a third were firmly committed. See the testimonies of the Métis in SBAA, Journal of Father Gabriel Cloutier, 1886.

70 Ibid., pp. 5260-5261.

71 Jules Le Chevallier, *Batoche: Les missionnaires du Nord-Ouest pendant les troubles de 1885* (Montreal: Dominican Press, 1941), p. 185-191. A.-G. Morice, *Histoire de l'Église catholique dans l'Ouest canadien, 1659-1905* (Winnipeg: published by the author, 1912), Vol. 2, p. 369.

72 SBAA, José Arcand's testimony in Journal of Father Gabriel Cloutier, 1886, p. 520; Auguste-Henri de Trémaudan, *Histoire de la nation métisse* (Montreal: Editions Albert Lévesque, 1935), p. 297.

73 GA, Faithful Companions of Jesus Collection, Journal of the St. Laurent House, 17, 18 and 19 April 1885.

74 For a detailed account of the four days of the Battle of Batoche, see Walter Hildebrandt, *The Battle of Batoche: British Small Warfare and the Entrenched Métis* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1985).

75 DA, Rome, Father Moulin, 7 July 1885.

76 Father Moulin's desperate words, "the government will take everything you do into account" [translation], and Bishop Grandin's reflection, "no doubt, Father Moulin saw farther than the tip of his nose" [translation], were reported in *Missions des Oblats de Marie-Immaculée*, 1886, Report of Bishop Grandin to his Superior-General, 17 October 1885.

77 GA, Faithful Companions of Jesus Collection, Journal of the St. Laurent House, 9 May 1885.

78 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father Végréville to the Superior-General, 11 May 1885.

79 Father Le Chevallier (op. cit., p. 198) cites Father Végréville's journal in support of this charge. In a letter to his Superior-General (see preceding note), Father Végréville mentions only a stray bullet.

80 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father Moulin to Bishop Taché, Prince Albert, 27 May 1885.

81 Ibid., Father Végréville to the Superior-General, 11 May 1885.

82 SHSBA, Frémont Papers, Journal and memoirs of Philippe Garnot, February 1886.

83 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1885 [Father Fourmond].

84 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father André to Bishop Taché, 4 June 1885. Father André, a man of many moods and a fiery temper, acted without reservation whenever he espoused a cause. Bishop Taché reprimanded him for his outspoken statements in the press, reminding him that they could have grave repercussions for the clergy. In fact, several Anglophone Protestant papers accused the clergy of connivance with the Métis. On the other hand, it is known that most Métis felt much resentment towards the clergy for their behaviour before and during the battle. In a letter to the Department of the Interior, published in *Le Manitoba* (St. Boniface) on 18 July 1885, Father Moulin also explained the difficulties and despair which had driven the Métis to take up arms and implored the government to recognize its errors and come to their aid.

85 PAA, OMI, Letters of Father André, Father André to Father Lacombe, 31 August 1885.

86 DA, Rome, Father Moulin, 4 January 1887.

87 PAA, OMI, Correspondence of Bishop Grandin, L. Clarke to Bishop Grandin, Prince Albert, 24 September 1886.

88 Ibid., Reply, 1 October 1886.

89 DA, Rome, Father Moulin, 4 December 1889. When the St-Laurent-de-Grandin mission was closed in 1894, most of the population of the mission was attached to the parish of St-Antoine-de-Padoue in Batoche. It was not until 1901 that a chapel was built in Fish Creek, and the French Canadians who had settled in Bellevue, about seven miles from Batoche, built a church in 1902, that is, several years after their arrival.

90 DA, Rome, Father Moulin, 17 November 1888.

91 PAA, OMI, Journal of Brother Célestin Guillet, 1895-96, 1900.

92 PADA, Father L. de G. Belleau to Bishop Prud'homme, 8 December 1925. He replies to the charges of irresponsibility and financial mismanagement.

93 Ibid., Father J.S. Brodeur, Administrator, to Barthélémi Pilon, 5 February 1924.

94 Ibid., Albert Caron to Bishop Prud'homme, 21 September 1925.

95 Ibid., Tobie Boyer, president, and Patrice Caron and Ambroise Gervais, Councillors, Petition to Bishop Prud'homme, 19 August 1926.

96 Ibid., Correspondence of Father Pierre E. Myre, Father Myre to Bishop Prud'homme, 30 November 1927.

97 Ibid., Petition of the Batoche parishioners to Bishop Prud'homme, 5 November 1927, presented by William Parenteau and Patrice Caron.

98 Ibid., Correspondence of Father Pierre E. Myre, Father Myre to Bishop Prud'homme, 30 November 1927.

99 Loc. cit.

100 Loc. cit.

101 Loc. cit.

102 Ibid., 7 November 1928; ibid., [around 1931]. Father Myre justified his position by stating that he is going to replace the Bank of Montreal, Sun Life and other speculators as landholders in Batoche.

103 Ibid., 30 November 1927.

104 PADA, Batoche Parish, Spiritual and financial reports, 1927-32.

105 Conversation with Mr. Henri Pilon, Batoche, 1976.

106 *Le Patriote de l'Ouest* (Prince Albert), 7 August 1929.

107 PADA, Father Robert to Father Olivier [1932].

108 Ibid., Correspondence about erecting a monument in Batoche, 1924-32; see also a recent publication on the subject: C.J. Taylor, "Some Early Problems of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (1983), pp. 3-24.

109 PADA, Mr. Samuel Nault to Bishop Prud'homme, 22 February 1926; Bishop Prud'homme to Mr. Nault, 18 May 1926; "Résolution [des Métis] envers l'Église" addressed to Bishop Prud'homme, 25 March 1932; and Testimony of Bishop Prud'homme, 29 March 1932.

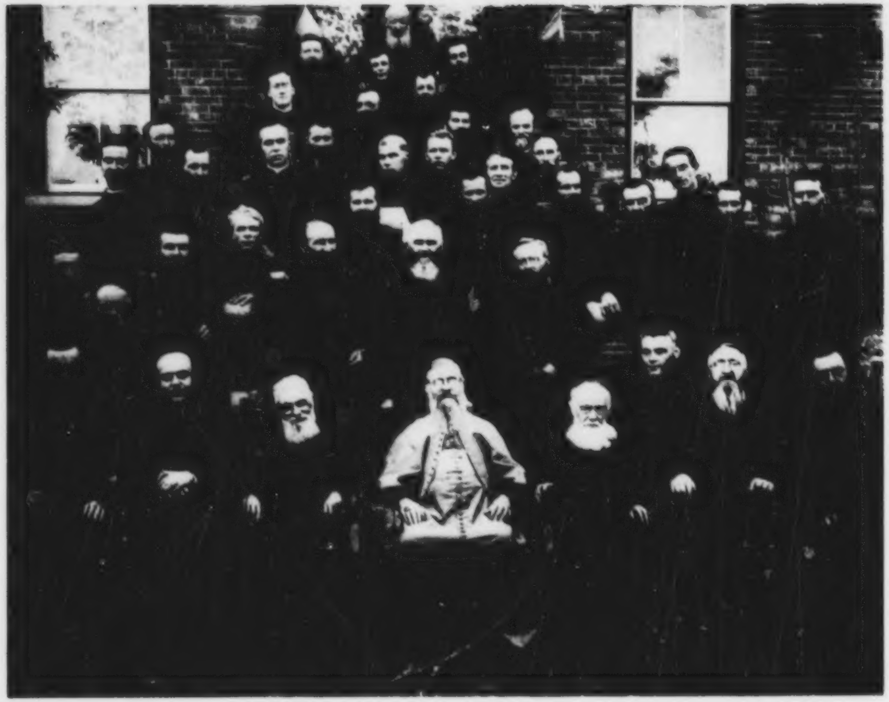


Fig. 19 "Les Pères de Prince-Albert, 1905." Photographed on the occasion of the golden jubilee of fathers Moulin and Gasté, sitting to the left and right respectively of Bishop Pascal. *Provincial Archives of Alberta, OMI Collection, OB 3803.*

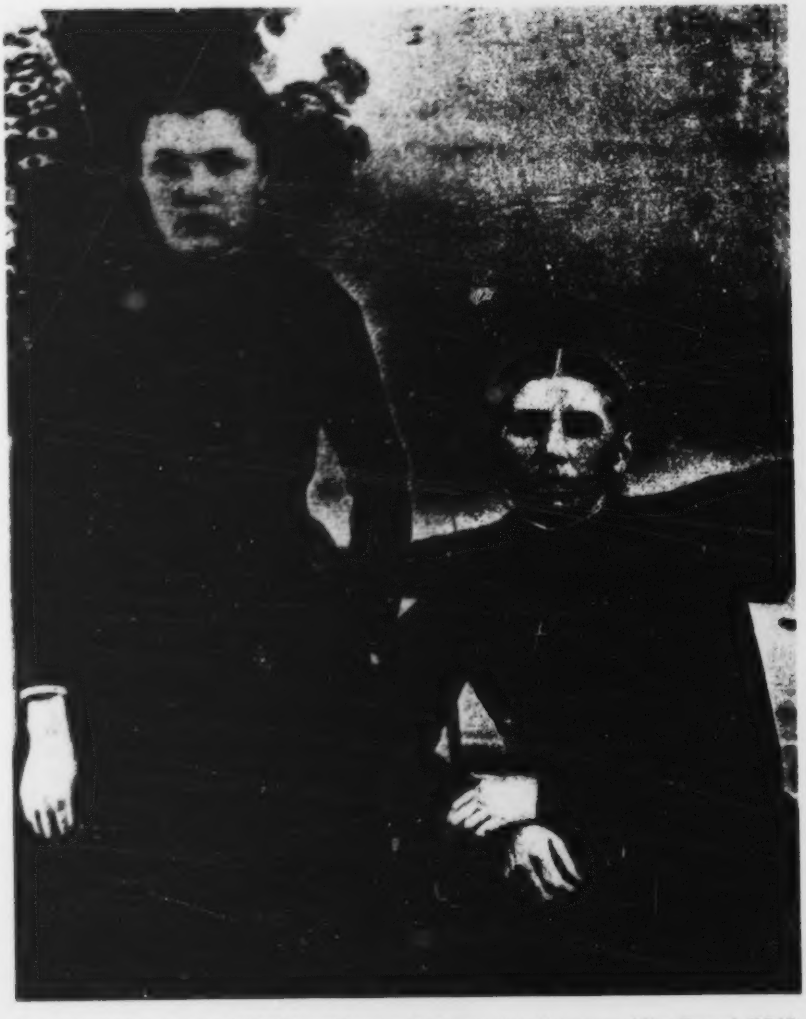


Fig. 20 Onésime Dorval (right) and her protégé Georgine d'Amours. Miss Dorval (1845-1932) was the instructress in Batoche from 1896 to 1914. *Canadian Parks Service, Winnipeg, Batoche Collection.*

Fig. 21 Onésime Dorval and her students at the St-Antoine-de-Padoue Mission in Batoche, ca. 1897. From left to right, the school built in 1894, the rectory in 1883 and the church in 1884. An annex to the rectory dates to 1896. *Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatoon, Cochin Collection.*

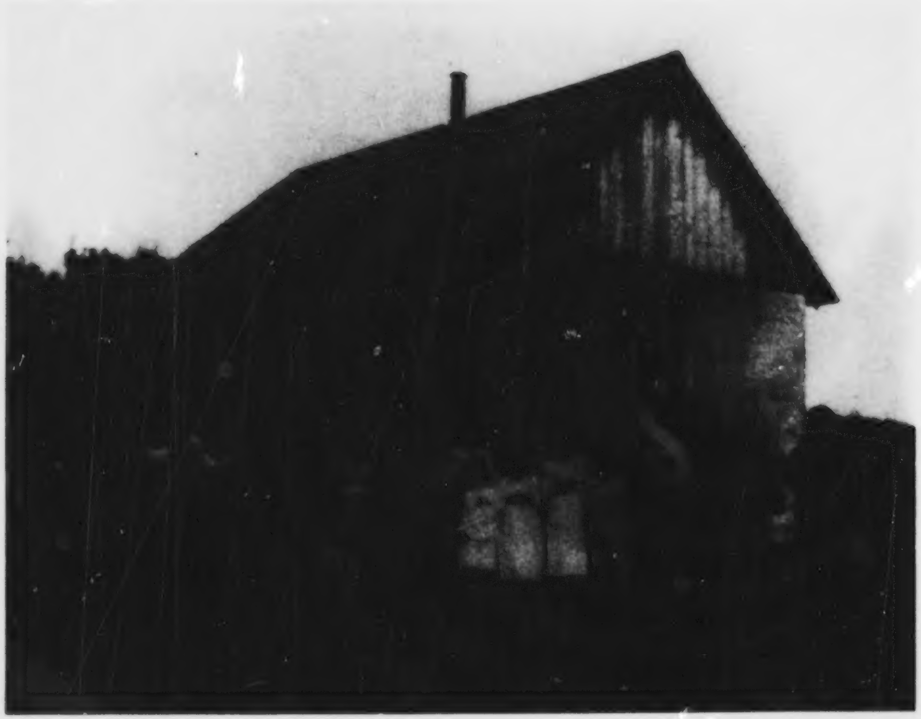


Fig. 22 St-Antoine-de-Padoue School (1894-1917) in Batoche ca. 1907. At far left is instructress Miss Dorval and at right Father Moulin. *Saskatchewan Archives Board, Regina, R-B1771*.

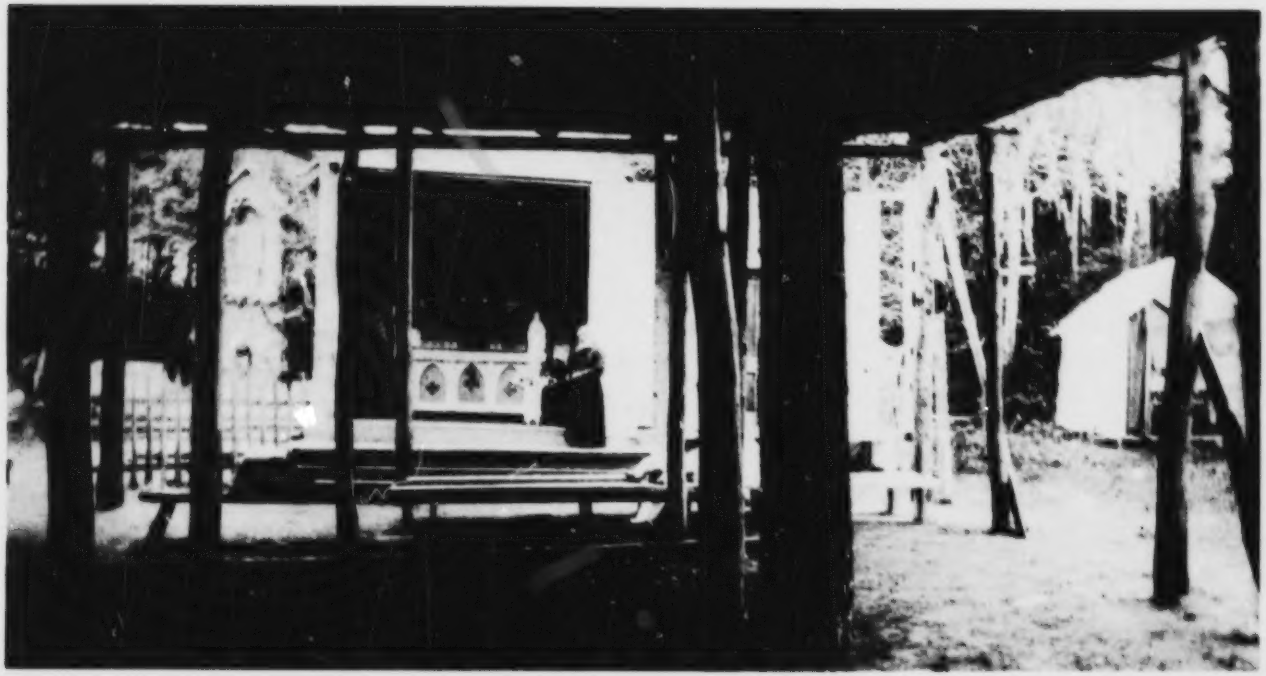


Fig. 23 Brother Célestin Guillet (1842-1911) in front of the new sanctuary of Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes in St. Laurent, 1906. Brother Guillet was in Batoche during 1895-96 and in 1900. *Provincial Archives of Alberta, OMI Collection, OB 2041.*

III POLITICAL ACTION, 1873-1910

THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE 1870s

The St. Laurent Council

After 1870, increasing numbers of Métis left Manitoba for the South Saskatchewan River area. The Métis were disappointed at their loss of political power following the creation of the Province of Manitoba. They now looked to the South Saskatchewan as a place where they could finally set up a distinct Métis community. The new settlement would allow them to make write their own laws and regulations and live independently. The extent of their colony and their seasonal movements made it even more necessary for them to elect a council or some form of local government.

In the past, custom required the captain of the hunt, with the assistance of adjutants or "soldiers," to look after the maintenance of order and the respect for established laws.[1] This practice had to be adapted somewhat to the new circumstances, but the basic democratic principle remained. In 1873, the St. Laurent Council, with Gabriel Dumont as president, adopted a constitution incorporating 28 laws. The council served at the same time as an administrative, military and judicial body during the annual hunts as well as during periods of residence in the colony.

Among the ordinances were Sunday observance, respect for private property, inviolability of contracts between employer and employee, and prevention and control of prairie fires. In case of violation, the penalty could be either confinement or a fine. This form of local government among the Métis was unparallelled in the North-West during those years.[2] According to author George Stanley, it was proof of independent and advanced political action.[3] It showed in fact that the inhabitants of the St. Laurent district were able to govern themselves without thereby challenging Canadian authority.[4] However, the Métis were very soon frustrated in their efforts. The distrust of the North-West Mounted Police and the territorial authorities of a form of local adminstration reminiscent of the provisional government of Red River in 1869-70 soon led to a confrontation. In 1875, there was an ugly incident. During a hunting trip in the spring, a few hunters violated the accepted rules and went ahead of the caravan. With the assent of the general assembly, the leader Gabriel Dumont and his captains imposed fines and fairly heavy sanctions on the guilty ones. To avenge themselves, the latter went to complain to the governmental authorities. According to Father André who witnessed the events:

> *As soon as they arrived at Fort Carlton to sell or barter their provisions, they complained of having been mistreated, robbed and almost killed. Moreover, they knew whom to complain to, for they chose people who took a jaundiced view of the establishment of laws and colonies in which they had not had the honour to take part.*[5] [Translation]

What followed was an expedition of 50 policemen led by Colonel French to convince the Métis to give up any attempt to exercise local power. There was even talk of putting an end to this "provisional government." The Métis sent out emissaries anxious to inform the governmental authorities that they and Dumont submitted without resistance and abandoned any form of self-government.[6] And yet, the chronicles of the time testify to the sense of responsibility and justice that animated the council.

> *In fact, following this confrontation, our good Métis, wanting to show how peaceful their intentions were, even agreed in their general assembly to return the fines they had levied to the malcontents.*[7]

Nevertheless, this incident dealt a serious blow to the council's authority and prestige. Deprived of all real power and without any outside support except for moral encouragement from the missionaries, it was soon reduced practically to inaction: "Since the humble legislation of the St. Laurent colony no longer had the right to punish offenders, it naturally lost any sanction it had had and thus died almost as soon as it was born" [translation].[8] The civil and religious authorities noted the social disintegration that followed among the Métis faced with lack of control over such economic activities as the hunt and the fur trade. Despite everything, the council continued to exercise some authority at the parish level.

The Territorial Government

During the 1870s, the Métis had no voice in the territorial government. From 1870 to 1876, the Territories were administered by the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and his councillors, who were appointed by the federal government and only some of whom were Francophone and Catholic. The South Saskatchewan Métis, who constituted the majority of the population, were not represented on this council, which in any case had only consultative powers.[9] Councillor Pascal Breland,[10] a Métis from St. François-Xavier, Manitoba, who was appointed to the territorial council in 1872 following pressure by the Métis to admit one of their own, did not, unfortunately, represent the Métis of the Saskatchewan district. The latter identified for the most part with Riel and endorsed the platform of the provisional government of 1869-70, whereas the partisans of Breland, who were more conservative and traditional, represented what was commonly called the "anti-Riel" faction.[11] Thanks to the intervention of Bishop Taché of St. Boniface, other Métis and French Canadians from Manitoba were appointed in 1873, namely Joseph Royal, Pierre Delorme and James McKay, but their arrival did not solve the problem.[12] While the new arrivals were more active within the council, they were no more able to defend the interests of the Métis residing in the Territories.

Yet the Métis of the North-West made their political interests known very early on. During the negotiations about the creation of the Province of Manitoba in 1870, they had expressed their disappointment at the exclusion of Saskatchewan. The missionaries in contact with the Métis at St-Paul-des-Cris, Fort des Prairies and Île à la Crosse and finally in the Saskatchewan district echoed those sentiments. Writing to Bishop Taché, Father Lacombe summed up the situation of the Métis in 1870 as follows:

> *I also forgot to tell you how sorry I and all the Saskatchewan Métis were to see that in the regulations and laws agreed on between Red River and Canada there was nothing for our part of the country. We thus remain as before. All the Métis and foreigners in this country have charged me with informing Your Lordship of their feelings. Everyone here is asking you to do on*

> *a small scale [underlining in original] for Saskatchewan what you did on a large scale and with so much wisdom and prudence for the Province of Manitoba.*[13] [Translation]

Despite the presence of a few Francophone and Catholic councillors on the territorial council,[14] the growing divisions in Manitoba after 1870 and the increasingly precarious minority position of Francophones in the following years made any direct intervention in favour of the Métis in the Territories difficult if not illusory.

Following the revisions of the North-West Territories Act in 1875 and 1877,[15] there were some improvements, including the transfer of the seat of government from Winnipeg to Battleford. There were also proposals to create electoral districts and, finally, to elect representatives from those districts starting in 1881. However, there was still no South Saskatchewan Métis on the new council, a decision Lieutenant-Governor Laird deplored. In an address delivered 1 February 1878, the St. Laurent Métis reiterated their demand for a representative.[16] Contrary to the petitioners' wishes, the federal government renewed Pascal Breland's mandate in 1878, on the pretext that he was the only Métis qualified for the position, a decision which was bound to hurt and further isolate the Saskatchewan Métis.[17] Moreover, at the first council meeting in Battleford in March 1877, the council adopted regulations to stop the destruction of the bison and control smallpox and other epidemics. It also created a system of permits and charges to facilitate the operation and maintenance of river crossings.

Still in 1877, the council granted French the same status as English in court proceedings and council deliberations, thus satisfying one of the Métis claims.[18] In addition, the council's ordinances and deliberations would be printed in both French and English. These measures appeased the Métis a little, but without weakening their resolve to obtain a representative on council as soon as possible. In 1879, during meetings at Duck Lake and St. Laurent, the Métis population rose up against the rumoured transfer of the seat of government back to Winnipeg[19] and supported any and all demands for a territorial legislature. It was not until 1881 that the electoral district of Lorne was created and that the Métis finally obtained a representative. The Lorne district was composed of the communities of Prince Albert, Carlton, Duck Lake, St. Laurent and Batoche, that is, areas with French or Scottish Métis majorities. Lawrence Clarke, chief officer of the Hudson's Bay Company, won the election. Thanks to Métis support, he defeated Captain Moore of Prince Albert. Clarke had distinguished himself as a benefactor of the missions.

Father André reports that the Métis "too often divided among themselves ... all got together this time to give a large majority to the Hudson's Bay Company officer ..." [translation], but Clarke was mainly the clergy's choice, in preference to Moore, who wore "masonic colours."[20] Clarke remained in office until 1883.

As for the courts, the 1870s also witnessed several confrontations between the Métis and the government and police, the latter being usually indifferent to the way of life and customs of the Métis. In 1879, the chronicle reports the case of a young Métis sentenced in 1879 to three months' imprisonment for slaughtering an ox belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. The authorities probably misinterpreted the situation or failed to understand the testimony, for the conviction stirred up part of the population of the St. Laurent area:

> *... believing that he had been unjustly convicted, they wanted to go and release him by brute force. Several hotheads had promised to join in, and their boasts made even the most peaceful waver ... Father André ... succeeded in calming down the angriest by promising to go to Battleford with a delegation of them to see the governor, who received them well ....*[21] [Translation]

The Treaty of 1876

A question of perhaps more interest and concern to the Métis during this period was that of the treaty concluded in 1876 between the federal government and the Amerindian population of the Fort Carlton area (Treaty No. 6). Most Métis did not consider themselves to be Amerindians, but the question of aboriginal rights was of particular interest to them.

For several years, the South Saskatchewan Métis had occupied plots of land along the two banks. As a result of their experiences in Manitoba, some of them had become more aware of the need to obtain precise guarantees concerning their lands. Their fears were very much like those of the Amerindians. The Métis, who were better informed or closer in mentality to the Eurocanadians, carefully observed the negotiations with the Amerindians intended to get them to cede their lands. Several Métis were even called upon to take part as interpreters or witnesses.[22] However, the role of the Métis as intermediaries remains generally obscure. It is not known to what extent they supported the Amerindians, nor what real impact the treaties had on their own claims during the following years. On the other hand, it is clear that the Métis of the Fort Carlton area urged the Amerindians of the area to take a relatively firm stand against Lieutenant-Governor Morris and the treaty commissioners. The authorities complained about the distrustful attitude of the Métis, especially those of the St. Laurent Council, and about their influence on Chief Kàmiyistowesit (Beardy) of Duck Lake. The Métis had several relatives in the Beardy group, as well as in the Kàpeyakwàskonam (One Arrow) one.[23]

It is interesting to note that the Duck Lake group "showed at first the greatest reluctance and made the most exorbitant claims" [translation][24] before the commissioners. Beardy in particular demanded measures to stop the disappearance of the bison. He also preferred to rent his lands for four years rather than hand them over for good to the government. But lacking the support of other Amerindians in the district, he did not obtain these conditions.

Could the Métis who attended the deliberations have insisted more on these conditions, or were they — like the Amerindians — won over to the government's side by clever tactics? Being always conscious of their ascendancy over the Amerindians and their inferiority to the Eurocanadians, the Métis may have had to yield to the stronger player, in this case, the treaty commissioners. Father André who witnessed the events reports that "the futile claims soon yielded to the governor's skill and fine promises ..." [translation].[25] Moreover, the prestige and authority of the Métis council had been seriously shaken by Colonel French's intervention in 1875. Nevertheless, several Métis notables or patriarchs were among the witnesses who signed the treaty on 23 August 1876.[26] Likewise, few of the Métis of the St. Laurent colony chose to join the Amerindians or to be bound by the treaty.

THE FIRST PETITIONS OF THE 1880S

During the years preceding the explosion of 1885, the Métis made many political demands. All the South Saskatchewan Métis were preoccupied by the land question, territorial as well as federal representation and the guarantee of what they called "their rights."

Within the structure of the territorial government, Batoche was part of the Lorne constituency from 1881 to 1888.[27] This electoral division was not the most satisfying one, for the outcome of the elections was decided by the people of Prince Albert, most of whom were from Ontario and Anglophone. Neither the Prince Albert *Times* nor the Battleford *Herald* supported the Métis cause. These two papers tended either to ignore their presence or to take sides against their claims, which were always too radical for them.[28]

From 1878 to 1882, there was a marked increase in the population of the Saskatchewan settlements. In 1883, the number of Métis within a radius of 25 miles around Batoche was estimated to be 1500.[29] The new arrivals settled mainly in the vicinity of the villages of Batoche, Duck Lake and St. Louis (Boucher). Batoche was the administrative centre, the "capital" of the South Saskatchewan Métis. Lawrence Clarke, the only elected representative to the territorial government during the first few years, held his seat until 1883. He was succeeded by D.H. Macdowall and then by O.E. Hughes.[30]

In 1881, Edgar Dewdney took over from David Laird as Lieutenant-Governor of the Territories.[31] Dewdney, a rather cold civil servant faithful to John A. Macdonald's policies, either did not understand the Métis or hardly took an interest in them. Yet during the first half of the decade, the Métis carried on a particularly active struggle. The territorial council was only one of several forums in which they expressed their frustrations and aspirations. Lacking federal representation, they addressed themselves to the Canadian government through reminders or petitions. From 1882 to 1885, they sent at least five such documents to Ottawa and Regina (the territorial capital from 1883 on).

The first petition, known as the one from "the inhabitants of St-Louis-de-Langevin" and drafted by Louis Schmidt,[32] was submitted to the Minister of the Interior in Ottawa through Joseph Royal, member for the federal constituency of Provencher in Manitoba.[33] According to Schmidt, whose testimony is supported by Father Végréville, neither Royal nor Deputy Minister A.M. Burgess acknowledged receipt of this petition. At about the same time, Lawrence Clarke, territorial member for the Lorne constituency, interceded in favour of his constituents in Ottawa. The dominant question was about surveying or resurveying the land in river-front lots. The petitioners and their intermediaries met with no success. In 1882, the inhabitants of St-Antoine-de-Padoue parish (Batoche) sent another petition signed by all the citizens including Father Moulin and Charles Nolin.[34] They received a negative reply. At that point, Father André, who was more aware of the frustrations of his parishioners, protested to Ottawa,[35] and Bishop Grandin agreed to transmit the requests of the inhabitants of the St. Laurent area during his next trip to Ottawa. All replies remained vague or non-committal. Moreover, the Métis demanded a Francophone lands officer in Prince Albert. It was only after Bishop Taché's personal intervention with the federal government that Schmidt was appointed deputy officer at the lands office in May 1884.[36]

In 1883, D.H. Macdowall was elected member of the territorial government. Under the influence of such leaders as Charles Nolin, Philippe Gariépy and Maxime Lépine, the Métis of Batoche and vicinity had supported Macdowall rather than Dr. Porter.[37] In return, the elected representative contributed $100 to the building fund for the Batoche church and promised to plead the Métis cause personally; but he, too, received only empty promises from Ottawa. These failures made the Métis determined to put pressure on the government. During the winter of 1883-84, Nolin and Lépine organized a committee to bring together the leading inhabitants of the district.[38]

This was followed by several "secret assemblies" in early 1884.[39] Participants discussed ways to claim rights, drew up lists of grievances and proceeded to elect a committee to study those grievances. Several of these meetings were held at the home of a halfbreed (or English Métis) in the Prince Albert area. Quite a few Eurocanadians there supported the Métis. It was during one of those assemblies, in April 1883, that participants voted in favour of a resolution to send a delegation to Ottawa and to go and get Riel in Montana.[40]

THE DEMANDS OF 1884

Riel's arrival in June solidified the consensus. He insisted on moderation and constitutional claims. The summer and fall of 1884 were marked by several political actions. In July, there was a big meeting at Charles Nolin's, as well as Riel's encounter with "the English" in Prince Albert,[41] and in August, a gathering at Xavier Letendre's, where an unsuccessful attempt was made to win the clergy's active support.[42] In June 1884, Bishop Grandin had not hesitated to intercede again on behalf of the Métis with Prime Minister Macdonald. The petition Bishop Grandin presented to Macdonald incorporated all the claims and grievances of the South Saskatchewan Métis. It also testified to the soundness of their demands. Among other things, they demanded the status of a province with a responsible government, the granting of titles and the resurveying of their lands, official recognition of Louis Riel's leadership and his appointment to the territorial council or the Canadian Senate.[43] They protested above all against lack of Métis representation in the territorial and federal governments, against the appointment and employment of foreigners rather than Métis, and finally, against the poor attention the government was paying to their petitions.

The inaction and incompetence of the territorial government were well known and deplored by all. On this point, the clergy were in agreement with the Métis.

> *It is time for the government to take some steps to organize this vast district. The country is really without a government and without an adminstration, and it is scandalous to see how government officials carry out their functions ... they are all crazy and inspire neither respect nor confidence in their competence or integrity. Everybody seems tired of this system, which flaunts the most shameless corruption everywhere. Everyone would therefore like to see a change in the administration of the country.*[44] [Translation]

On the other hand, the clergy came out categorically against taking a radical position or one involving the use of arms. Towards the summer of 1884, the clergy became afraid of the determination of the Métis and began to distrust Riel. The latter often attacked the clergy in his speeches. The government, often in concert with the missionaries, observed his doings and sought a means to get him to leave.

> *Judge Rouleau and Indian Commissioner Mr. Hayter Reed, both members of the North-West Territorial Council, arrived here, not on a special mission, but certainly to see with their own eyes how things were going around here .... Mr. Rouleau saw Father André about Riel and asked him for information ....*[45] [Translation]

At that point, the government also tried to divide or appease the Métis by offering them certain positions. Michel Dumas was appointed farming instructor on the One Arrow Reserve, and Louis Marion obtained the same position on the Beardy Reserve. The government also flattered Nolin and Lépine by offering them a contract for installing telegraph poles,[46] but Riel convinced Nolin not to accept this very enticing contract.[47]

Representative D.H. Macdowall and former representative L. Clarke also mounted an active campaign against Riel. In December, Macdowall wrote to Dewdney "... to ask him to obtain a few thousand dollars for Riel, so he could leave the country and leave us in peace. Father André will also write to him to that effect" [translation].[48] The latter took the opportunity to emphasize the qualities of certain reliable Métis, as opposed to those "aux têtes chaudes" (hotheads).[49]

THE NATIONAL DAY AND THE FLAG

Batoche was the birthplace of a movement to obtain a patron saint and national day distinct from those of the French Canadians, who celebrated Saint-Jean Baptiste Day on June 24. Louis Riel promoted the idea with the clergy and his compatriots. In a speech in Prince Albert in August 1844, "he explained the idea of a distinct nationality for the Métis. He wanted French Canadians to identify with the Métis and the Métis for their part to become French Canadians" [translation].[50] The movement gained strength the following month when a crowd gathered in the St. Laurent church to explain the idea to Bishop Grandin. Moïse Ouellette, Gabriel Dumont and Louis Riel made speeches to that effect, after which

> *Ludger Gareault [a French Canadian], Paul Schley [a Frenchman] and Louis Riel [a Métis] together approached Bishop Grandin. The bishop accepted their request and asked them to place their trust in God and ask for the protection of a saint.*[51] [Translation]

Riel chose St. Joseph as the patron saint and Saint John the Baptist as a secondary protector.[52] The Métis celebrated their National Day for the first time on 24 September 1884 and afterwards, from 1886 on, on July 24.

They also founded the St. Joseph Society to promote the religious, political and social consciousness of the Métis. The society adopted a banner showing "on the one side St. Joseph carrying the infant Jesus and on the other Saint John the Baptist as he is represented on the banners of the Saint-Jean Baptiste Societies" [translation].[53]

In 1885, Louis Riel and his council, the "Exovidat," adopted a flag which underscored the national pride and at the same time the deeply religious spirit of the Métis people. The primacy of religious symbols illustrates the more theocratic nature of Riel's government, the so-called "little" provisional government of Saskatchewan, compared to the provisional government of Red River.[54] Eyewitness accounts of the flag, which has not survived in its entirety, lead us to believe that it showed the Virgin Mary, who could be represented in various ways, on a white background. According to a report by Father Fourmond, following the outbreak of the insurrection,

> *Louis ... raised the standard of revolt the day before St. Joseph's Day, calling it to the holiest of actions and placing it under the protection of St. Joseph and Our Lady of Lourdes .... As a flag he chose the white flag of ancient France, saying that he was called to renew its ancient glories. On it he placed a large image of Mary's immaculate heart.*[55] [Translation]

According to another description, it was a "flag of St. Louis, which they already had in 1870, with the hearts of Jesus and Mary on the other side" [translation].[56] The flag of St. Louis was white with a royal blue shield bearing three golden fleurs-de-lis.[57] In their journal, the Faithful Companions of Jesus write: "we passed in front of the Council [Fisher's] house, with the white flag of the new government flying above it" [translation].[58] These descriptions are corroborated by Canadian government combatants in 1885. Another eyewitness account refers to an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus fastened to a white ground.[59] It is possible that there may have been more than one version of this flag, that is, a white ground bearing various religious representations. Taking into account all of these descriptions, we may conclude that the main flag of the Métis in Batoche in 1885 was in all probability a white flag with an image of Our Lady of Lourdes fastened to it. This standard has not survived, but the image has been removed and claimed as a souvenir after the Battle of Batoche. Partly torn, it is now preserved in the National Archives of Canada. The following poem, signed by Louis Riel, is inscribed on the back of the image:

You are rightly called Our Lady of Lourdes
You whose Son went through such heavy (lourdes) sufferings
O Virgin whose heart was pierced seven times
By the most bitter pain
________ *mother* ________
Whose soul suffered so much from cradle to cross!
Since you have chosen the Kingdom of France
In which to give free rein to your great sweetness
Chase from this country the deep darkness
Of _____ *desolate* _______. *May its deliverance*
________ *be accomplished by you*
________ *whose heart is so sweet*
________ *Our Lady of Lourdes*

Our sufferings are overwhelming and heavy (lourdes)
Deliver us from evil, we beg of you
[Be so good as to favour] our noble undertakings
[Be so good as to] make them succeed

Let us triumph over evil and its excesses
Pray for us so that God may deign to sweeten
Those who are evil strike them down and even [subjugate] them
Under his beneficent law.

Pray to our good Master
Jesus Christ to prove today to mortal men
That he alone is Lord, Emperor, King, Monarch,
President, Czar, Premier; pray to him to mark me
With the Seal of the Elect at the foot his altar.

Pray to Jesus for me! Pray that I may support
The Church with all my might
Make me stronger than other people
[That] I may forever remain faithful to my duty.

Louis "David" Riel[60] [Translation]

In 1885, the Métis also adopted a national hymn with a religious spirit. Father Fourmond passed the text down to us with the comment: "Here is the copy of their national hymn which is bound to edify you" [translation].[61]

Air:
Holy Spirit Descend on us
Refrain:
Heart of Jesus protect us (repeat)
In life in death we are (repeat) all yours

First Stanza:
Heart of Jesus, our hope,
Hear our chants and our vows,
To our suffering country (twice)
Give unity and constancy
Give happy times

Second Stanza:
Heart of Jesus our love our glory
In our battles for salvation for honour
Guide, o guide our steps to victory,
Be, o be our liberator

Third Stanza:
O St. Joseph, Patron Saint of the Church
John the Baptist, protector of French Canadians
Save the French and Métis race
By your conquered love [Translation]

The memory of the victims of the 1885 insurrection remained alive in the minds of their compatriots during the following years. In 1889, a committee was set up under the direction of Moïse Ouellette with a view to erecting "a monument in honour of the Métis victims of the War of 1885" [translation].[62] They received many contributions, and in 1901 a monument bearing the names of the fallen Métis and Amerindians was erected in the Batoche cemetery. Every year, the Métis laid a wreath of flowers in the cemetery and paid homage to the "martyrs" of their national war.

THE DEMANDS OF 1885

In 1885, the positions were hardening more and more on both sides. Riel together with his most fervent partisans drafted a new petition.[63] It set out the same principles as the preceding ones, but adopted a more urgent tone. The government's response in January 1885 was extremely disconcerting: it did not want to negotiate with Riel and would consider the demands presented to it at the proper time and place.[64] According to Schmidt and several others who witnessed these developments, the government thus precipitated the final outcome.

> *The government ... stalled too long, for tempers were finally beginning to flare up. It brought the agitation to its peak when it finally told the Métis that it would perhaps be disposed to give favourable consideration to their demands, but had no need to see Riel for that purpose .... The ministers were strangely deceived in this instance. They should have done the opposite and granted immediately what was demanded of them, which was not at all exorbitant. The troubles could thus have been avoided.*[65] [Translation]

When he received the news in early February, Riel is said to have exclaimed: "Forty days from now Ottawa will have my reply" [translation].[66] During the following weeks, he was particularly preoccupied and, faced with this latest failure, thought of going back to Montana. But Dumont, Lépine, Ouellette and Nolin urged him to stay, and from this moment on they were committed to fighting the government's intransigent opposition by force of arms if necessary. On 18 March, the "little provisional" government of Saskatchewan was set up,[67] and Pierre Parenteau Sr. became President, Philippe Garnot Secretary, and Gabriel Dumont Adjutant-General. Riel also set up a people's council or "exovidat" composed of about 20 members or "exovedes." Following the outbreak of armed conflict at Duck Lake on 26 March 1885,[68] the government's inaction and indifference gave way quickly to mobilization.

On 24 April, the Métis met the Canadian expeditionary corps under the command of General Middleton at the Tourond coulee (Fish Creek). The engagement ended with a Métis victory. The Métis then pulled back to Batoche, where they dug trenches and laid ambushes, waiting for the Canadian offensive to resume. On 9 May, Middleton and his army of over 800 men attacked Batoche. It is important to note that the expeditionary corps succeeded in penetrating the Métis defences only on 12 May, the final day of the battle. For three days, Dumont and some 250 poorly armed combatants were able to hold the Canadian army in check.[69]

The Impact of the Uprising

The "troubles" of 1885 sowed discord and even created a split among the Métis. On the one side were the partisans of Dumont and Riel and on the other the opponents of the use of arms. The strong hold of the two Métis leaders naturally attracted many of the undecided. Those opposed to Riel tended to stay on the sidelines or discreetly leave the area. It was especially after the shock of defeat that the divisions came out into the open and grew more pronounced. The loss of life, the arbitrary arrests and the denunciations provoked a hardening of the positions or a run-for-your-life attitude. In order to avoid further persecution, several Métis now denied any affiliation to or participation in the insurrectionary movement. For the same reason, some also went to testify openly against their compatriots.[70] The humiliation and constraints of defeat also led to a kind of psychological withdrawal within the population. The political expression of it was at least a formal disavowal of Dumont's party and his "Reds"[71] and affiliation to the conservative faction and the party in power. However, the withdrawal and disavowal were only relative, for the population of Batoche continued to struggle in secret during the following years.

Following the fall of Batoche on 12 May several Métis fled and took refuge in the United States, especially along the Canadian border in North Dakota and Montana. The Canadian government, suspicious of the activities of certain leaders, including Gabriel Dumont and Michel Dumas, set up a spy network to watch over them. One of the agents, James Anderson, reported on the comings and goings of Dumont in the fall of 1885.

> *...about thirty Halfbreeds arrived here from South Saskatchewan some few weeks ago, fifteen stayed here and others went on to Sun River ... settled at Lewistown: Gabriel Dumont, wife, 1 child, Edouard Dumont, wife, 2 children, Jean Dumont, Parenteau, wife, 3 children. Gabriel Dumont is living with his brother-in-law, David Wilkie and others are building small houses for the winter. They arrived here with twenty horses and very little money. I had a long conversation with Dumont ...*[72]

The authorities feared a new uprising or a coalition with the Amerindians to the south, particularly the Dakota and Blackfoot. It was rumoured that Dumont would come back supported by a fair number of them, as well as by the Métis who had settled in the United States. According to another agent along the Canadian-American border:

> *... yesterday an intelligent and respectable half-breed Charles Pruden called in my store in a state of semi- intoxication ... on Riel question ... said there would be "big trouble" next spring; Dumont would be their leader; and when the Halfbreed nation* called, they must all go and fight, and they would clear all the white men out of this their country, and take their property ....[73]

Several Métis refugees also campaigned to mobilize their compatriots. A. McKay, a Métis working for the government who passed through the Turtle Mountain area in early 1886, reports that "Michel Dumas has all the Sioux to join him ... given people to understand he was Gabriel Dumont."[74] He added that there were rumours of a "big row up north next spring ... French Halfbreeds very bitter against English Halfbreeds because Riel was hung ...."[75]

A report from Montana confirms that the Métis went back and forth along the border, and in particular, visited the various centres inhabited by their relatives and compatriots. The Nault brothers (Napoléon and Elie) regularly travelled between St. Vital, Manitoba, St. Joe, Dakota, and Billings, Montana. An account from Dunseith, Dakota, confirms that there were attempts to regroup.

> *... Met an old Indian Chief named Enoch. He is off the Sioux reserve ... on his way down he had met two breeds from Batoche [said] that they come by way of Qu'Appelle, Fort Ellice and St. Boniface. That they were working up the Breeds and that the Blackfoot and Blood Indians were going to join them and that they would make it a better fight than they did last year.*[76]

The feared offensive never materialized. The leaders of 1885 were dispersed. Norbert Delorme was in the Battleford area, Dumas and Dumont were in the United States, and the others were in prison at Stony Mountain, Manitoba. In a conciliatory but calculated gesture, the authorities released the Métis during the summer and fall of 1886. Maxime Lépine, Philippe Gariépy and Philippe Garnot went back home. The most influential exiles were also invited to come back, particularly

Jean-Baptiste Boucher Sr. in Fort Assiniboine and David Tourond and Alexandre Venne at Turtle Mountain.[77] Finally, a general amnesty was granted in the fall of 1886. This gesture, as well as the wretched condition of some of the refugees, ruled out any plans for a new revolt, but the rumours persisted until 1887. Thus in May, Brother Némez in Prince Albert reported to his colleague Brother Guillet in Batoche:

> *We have just learned that there are serious rumours of war. The savages want to rise up, this time the Blackfoot ... in Batoche ... many [Métis] who talk about a new rebellion. Two savages have visited all the reserves to tell all the Cree savages that they had to be ready, that Gabriel Dumont was going to arrive with all the savages from the other side of the border and that they would have everything they needed as regards munitions and food.*[78] [Translation]

But Dumont did not succeed in consolidating the Amerindian and Métis forces, and the Métis and Cree in the Canadian North-West were too destitute to act without support. Henceforth, the Métis would take the political rather than the armed route.

Political Repercussions

The insurrection and especially Riel's execution in November 1885 had important political consequences. On the national level, the Liberals did not miss the opportunity to accuse the Conservatives of injustice and murder. Even if the Métis and especially the clergy did not immediately break with the Conservatives, the traditional tie with this party was broken. In Quebec, the Nationalists under Honoré Mercier launched an "appeal to the race" and assembled at the Champ de Mars to condemn the martyrdom of their compatriots. According to O.D. Skelton:

> *... Public subscriptions provided for Riel's defence at the trial, and after the sentence, press and platform demands for his pardon grew more insistent .... And in any case ... Riel and the people he had championed were kinsmen .... It was in vain that every priest on the Saskatchewan wrote publicly and privately denouncing Riel as the arch-enemy of the Church, anti-Christ ....*[79]

On the other hand, A.S. Silver maintains on the basis of the newspapers of the period that French-Canadian opinion was opposed to the uprising and condemned Riel. He also notes that French Canadians were among Middleton's soldiers and that some of them even fought the Métis at Fish Creek. However, after that battle, and probably in part because of the publicity and the testimony of certain combatants, public opinion became more qualified. There is no denying that Mercier and his partisans took advantage of the situation and that some French Canadians remained non-committal on the question, but it should also be recognized that public opinion in Quebec was generally more favourable to the Métis than in Manitoba.[80]

The Métis cause was not entirely lost, nor was the outcome entirely negative for them. Despite the defamatory and discriminatory policy which followed, the defeat of 1885 acted in a sense as a kind of stimulant. This is borne out by the subsequent events. While Métis political action was often isolated and sometimes marked by deep internal divisions, it was all the more resolute.

The Question of Compensations

One of the first questions to arise after the hostilities were over was that of claims. As early as February 1886, the government set up a commission of inquiry into losses. Everyone was invited to submit his claims. Five categories of victims were established on that basis. In sum, the first two included those who were able to prove that they had supported the government, while the three others disqualified the claimants for complicity with the rebels or non-support of the government.

The tactics of Métis families who had suffered losses was to plead that they had been drawn involuntarily into the conflict, either by ignorance or by Riel's intrigues. Several spouses of "rebels" also tried to prove in vain that they had individual claims to ownership (especially in real estate) by virtue of their dowry. But their declarations were not accepted. On the other hand, most Métis did not consider themselves rebels, but rather victims of injustice who had been compelled to join a "national" war. The combat had been unequal and its consequences disproportionately devastating.[81] They were careful not to express these views openly or to denounce the execution of Riel whom they still honoured.[82]

The French Canadians and the commissioners of the inquiry were of the opinion "that having contributed to their own losses, the Métis were not admissible for any compensation" [translation].[83] However, what aroused most animosity among the Métis in connection with their claims was the frankly arbitrary and partisan manner in which the government dealt with the question. It invited denunciations, which created much anxiety and division within the population. Most were prudent, but some were less scrupulous and did not hesitate to implicate their neighbours in order to serve their own interests.[84] On the other hand, several shopkeepers or merchants in Batoche succeeded in having their claims accepted, for they had influential witnesses and were avowed Conservatives. But what provoked most resentment was not the indemnities granted to Xavier Letendre, Georges Fisher or even Mrs. Tourond (whose sons had been known "rebels"). It was rather the compensations granted afterwards to certain individuals who had been actively involved in the "movement" and who had even carried arms, except perhaps at the Battle of Batoche. These included Baptiste and William Boyer and especially Charles Nolin.

Nolin was one of the known leaders, along with Riel and Dumont. Until May 1885, he had been active within the "little" provisional government. He fled to Prince Albert during the Battle of Duck Lake and tried to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of the authorities by agreeing to be one of the principal witnesses for the prosecution at Louis Riel's trial.[85] His conduct as well as his subsequent indemnity aroused respectively contempt and envy. According to Philippe Garnot, who was as much of an intriguer as Nolin but had been convicted: "... as soon as he smelled gunpowder, he thought it was time to escape. And yet, if you had known Nolin as I knew him before, you would have taken him for bravery itself, the way he went around intimidating those who were weaker than he ..." [translation].[86] Speaking of Baptiste Boyer, he added "... a councillor [Boyer] also deserted, but he had more of an excuse because he went in the direction of Lake Qu'Appelle and had never been one of those who had led people to where they were" [translation].[87]

However, for the population in general, whether directly involved or not, there was no compensation at all, even though several among the Métis insisted. Take for example the case of Emmanuel Champagne, a known and avowed participant in the resistance. The testimony given during his appeal to the Court of the Exchequer showed that his furs and merchandise had been stolen after the battle and that his "beautiful grey mare" had been requisitioned by the general.[88] An avowed Liberal, he received no indemnity for his losses, evaluated at $13 310. Philippe Gariépy, another "Red," received no compensation.[89] Moreover, none of the "people's" or farmers' and freighters' claims were accepted, except in the case of a few widows, old people, and priests or nuns. The inequality and injustice of the compensations gave rise to much agitation and rivalry and left the neediest to their fate.

THE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS OF 1885 AND 1887

The question of compensations and several other points were part of the political program of the Métis during the first federal election in 1887. After 1885, deep resentment caused most Métis to turn away from their traditional support of the Conservative party or its candidates.[90] The Liberals or "Reds" of the South Saskatchewan were in touch with Mercier and the Nationalists in Quebec. At an assembly in Batoche, Philippe Garnot introduced a motion to support "a letter he had sent to one of his friends in Lower Canada to thank the Liberals and the Rouges who had managed to get him and his comrades released from prison. Alek [sic] Fisher supported him in a virulent speech against the government" [translation].[91] According to Father Fourmond, this "band" of malcontents threatened the unity of the French Catholics in the district against the Anglophone majority in Prince Albert. In fact, the Métis were divided; some of them distrusted the so-called "authors" of the rebellion: Lépine, Nolin and Garnot.[92]

In the territorial election of 17 September 1885, Owen E. Hughes, a Prince Albert merchant, won over Dr. Porter by a plurality of eight votes in the Lorne constituency.[93] But this election was relatively inconsequential for the Métis of the district in view of the unrepresentative nature of the territorial council. In 1886, Saskatchewan obtained for the first time a representative on the federal level: the election set for 15 March 1887 was therefore particularly important. The candidates were the Liberal David Laird, former Lieutenant-Governor of the Territories, and the Conservative D.H. Macdowall, former territorial representative for Lorne. According to Father Fourmond's chronicle in 1886, the clergy and Métis "bourgeoisie" supported Macdowall and the government,[94] but a public meeting held at Batoche showed that most Métis did not follow this line:

> *... since most of them could not resign themselves to supporting a government against which they had so many grievances, they went over to the Liberal side. They were supported in this move by two French Canadians [including a Mr. Campeau] who had come specially to relight the fire smouldering under the ashes.*[95] [Translation]

As the majority of Métis had voted for the Liberals, Macdowall's victory cost them the favour of the government. However, during his two mandates (1887-96), Macdowall tried to represent the interests of all the Métis of his constituency.[96]

NEW PETITIONS

The Joint Petition (1886)

From 1886 on, the citizens of the Batoche area went back to sending petitions. The first one was presented at an assembly in St-Laurent-de-Grandin on 24 February 1886.[97] Signed by Jean Caron, president (drafting committee) and Octave Régnier,[98] secretary (drafting committee), it received the support of the majority. This temporary alliance between the conservative faction and the so-called "radicals" put the Métis in a stronger position to advance their demands. The 11 resolutions dealt mainly with the economic situation, unfavourable since the insurrection, while suggesting ways to come to the aid of the population. The tone of the petition was humble and moderate, suited for gaining the confidence of the authorities who still distrusted them. The petitioners' objectives were better living conditions and more self-sufficiency. The Métis did not want to participate in any economic assistance programs that would make them indebted to the government.[99] The latter's reaction is known from a memorandum sent by the Minister of the Interior Thomas White to the Privy Council. It showed little sensitivity to the special situation of the Métis and expressed the view that they had to act and be considered like any other citizens. In short, considering that the petitioners had been guilty of rebellion, the reply did not grant any of their demands.[100]

The government had already announced the impending release of the Stony Mountain prisoners and its amnesty for the exiles. On these points, the Métis were very grateful, but asked for exemption from customs duties on imported cattle to enable exiles to come back with their herds.[101] Obtaining this right made it easier for some of them to return in 1887.

Dumont and the Liberals' Petition (1888)

However, the population of Batoche addressed the following petition to Laurier and the Liberal party in the hope of winning that party's support. With this in view, the "radical" Métis formed committees and called meetings from 1887 on. The "ringleaders" Maxime Lépine, Alexandre Fisher and Philippe Garnot, who had just been released from prison, were in touch with Gabriel Dumont. Although he, too, had been given amnesty, he hesitated about coming back to Canada, especially to the North-West Territories.[102] During this interval, he kept up a correspondence with his fellow citizens.[103] He informed them of his meetings with Honoré Mercier and other personalities sympathetic to the Métis cause. He incited the population to action to claim such rights as compensation for losses suffered in 1885 and to obtain scrips (certificates that could be exchanged for land).

Dumont, the military leader and former combatant, had succeeded the political leader Louis Riel. Even though Dumont was still a partisan of a solution by force of arms rather than by compromise, only one option remained open to him in 1888: the peaceful way.[104] Dumont, too, gave himself a "mission," that of justifying the actions of his leader Louis Riel.

> *Riel is dead and I am anxious to speak for him in the name of those for whom he laid down his life. I have always worked to place on a solid basis our religious, civil, and political institutions, as well as the Social* [sic] *of the North-West, my country, and I regret to say that I and mine have been badly rewarded by the Government for this.*[105]

The events surrounding the petitions sent to Wilfrid Laurier in 1888 testified to increased and intense political activity. The members of the drafting committee came mostly from the ranks of avowed Liberals, such as the Lépine and Garnot families, but they were joined by moderates and former Conservatives like Jean Caron.[106] A preliminary communication sent to Laurier on 17 December 1887 outlined the main grievances or points to be elaborated in the petition: recognition of the aboriginal rights of the Métis people, disposal of the lands question by granting titles, lack of impartiality in the adjudication of claims for losses suffered during the "troubles" of 1885.[107] Contrary to the government policy concerning Amerindians,

> *... no arrangement has ever been made either directly or indirectly with the Métis of the country, while such arrangements have been made with the savages who constitute only about half the population of the North-West.*[108] [Translation]

The same communication attributed the responsibility for the outbreak of resistance to the Conservative government and denounced the patronage which that government had practiced since then on the claims. The members of the committee also deplored the lack of French institutions and services, as well as the lack of Métis government officials.

In the spring of 1888, Alex Fisher advised Laurier that Maxime Lépine and Philippe Garnot "have left the committee and parted company with us ..." [translation].[109] In a letter to his "leader" Gabriel Dumont, he described the nature of the split.

> *The Métis of Batoche suspect Mr. l'Epine [sic] to be in league with Mr. Charles Nolin, and you know that the Métis have an aversion to the said Charles Nolin. You also know that there are some Métis here, such as Nolin, the Boyer brothers [Baptiste and William] and Xavier Batoche [known as Letendre] who are against everything we do, as are the Batoche and Venne families. These are all people who were paid by the government, and they are all at the service of the government.*[110] [Translation]

The Métis were especially suspicious of Charles Nolin,[111] witness for the prosecution at louis Riel's trial. Since then, he had taken up with the Conservatives, like other members of the local bourgeoisie, including Xavier Letendre, the Fisher borthers (Georges and Ambroise) and the Boyer and Venne families. This group enjoyed certain governmental favours, especially in the form of public works contracts. Several had been paid compensation for losses suffered during the insurrection. The Conservative government's partiality in settling these claims had led to much resentment among the "disadvantaged" Liberals. As for Lépine's "treason," Lépine had been one of Dumont's main correspondence when he was a member of the Liberal committee and had turned over Dumont's letters to the North-West Mounted Police, for reasons which are not entirely clear. Even if Dumont's writings were not compromising, they had been addressed to Lépine in strict confidence. Lépine's behaviour is probably to be explained by the prevailing climate of political instability and general distrust. Having been only recently released from prison, he may perhaps have been afraid to get involved in an action which might well have disastrous consequences for him. Moreover, Nolin, who was a relative of his, as well as the missionaries may have convinced him to change sides.[112] Garnot, who was more suspect since the 1887 election campaign, remained on the sidelines. Nonetheless, neither Lépine nor Garnot dared to sign the petition drafted by the Conservatives in December 1888.

Deprived of their support as well as that of a former Liberal, Philippe Gariépy,[113] who had recently been enticed into the Conservative camp, the Liberals now relied on Alex Fisher, Jean Caron and Emmanuel Champagne[114] to work on the memorandum. Being better educated than his associates, Fisher took charge of the drafting. The petition, which was finally sent in March 1888, has not been preserved nor entered into the parliamentary records. On the other hand, the resolutions in it were similar to those of the communication of 17 December 1885.[115] The "Reds" had a great deal of difficulty getting their petition signed and sent.[116] Fisher keeps mentioning the "betrayals," deceptions and little schemes of the "Blues." All these setbacks also testify to the division among the Métis, which threatened to weaken them politically. In a letter to Dumont, Fisher summed up the attitude of the Métis as follows:

> *And so, my dear Gabriel, you'll know where you stand. You know all the Métis around here, most of whom are very decent people, but we are sorry to say, there are also some pretty bad teasers.*[117] [Translation]

A little later, Fisher complied with one of Wilfrid Laurier's requests and wrote an account of the insurrection of 1885.[118] This exhaustive document presents an unfamiliar version of the events of 1885 and the background to them. Its aim was to justify the action of the Métis, and considering that it naturally presents a personal point of view, it shows much frankness and sensitivity.

The Conservatives in Ottawa made fun of the petition sent to Laurier in March 1888, not recognizing the injustices committed by their government. A colleague of William Pearce, Superintendent of Lands, wrote to him:

> *... I think you will smile when you read it. The proposition of children born between 1870 and 1888 [sic] getting something is definite, but all the foregoing is so vague and so untrue as to make it difficult to deal with ....*[119]

The Conservatives' Petition (1888-89)

The Conservatives of Batoche and the neighbouring parishes were quick to take their turn and send a petition to Sir John A. Macdonald. The signatories were mostly members of the bourgeoisie, like Xavier Letendre, Baptiste Boyer and Charles Nolin (the committee president), as well as Father Fourmond, parish priest of St. Laurent. Several of their resolutions were similar to those of their Liberal fellow citizens. Among other things, they demanded assistance programs to alleviate the misery and promote economic progress, establishment of a technical school and a telegraph office, and the hiring of local manpower for the new Mounted Police barracks. Their demand for land grants to Métis born in the North-West between 1870 and 1885 repeated the demand of Alex Fisher and the Liberals. From the political point of view, the petitioners deplored the unfairness of the electoral boundaries of the new territorial constituency of Batoche. Created in 1888, it recognized the political power of the Métis. But the French Métis population had been split into two by excluding St-Louis-de-Langevin and including Saskatoon, an Anglophone community.[120] Revision of the constituency boundaries was indispensable if they were to obtain a Métis, Catholic and Francophone majority. This demand was supported by the Saskatchewan representative D.H. Macdowall. Xavier Letendre went to Ottawa in February 1889 and personally handed the petition to Macdonald.

Even though he was favourably disposed, the Minister of the Interior reacted in an ambivalent manner. On the subject of redrawing the electoral boundaries, he deferred to the authority of the territorial assembly, but some of their other demands were granted.[121] Moreover, they were assured that the telegraphic service connecting Batoche and Duck Lake since 1886 would be permanent, and a Mounted Police post was established at Batoche in 1888. At first the Mounted Police occupied Baptiste Boyer's buildings and then moved into Xavier Letendre's house, which it bought in 1895. The much-desired economic assistance was tied to so many conditions that few citizens took advantage of it.[122] All in all, if we compare the results of the petitions, the Conservative one was more successful than Alex Fisher's Liberal one.

THE TERRITORIAL ELECTIONS OF 1888

It was in this contentious atmosphere that the first election for the new Legislative Assembly of the Territories was held in June 1888. This election was particularly important for the new constituency of Batoche with its Métis and Francophone majorities. The candidates were Georges Fisher Jr. of Batoche and Hillyard Mitchell of Stobart near Duck Lake.[123] The winner was Fisher, the Francophone Catholic candidate. But Mitchell contested the election, claiming that there had been irregularities (blackmail, double voting) at the Batoche polling station. The population was in turmoil. The Métis had united behind Fisher, who had succeeded in rallying his rival Charles Nolin. But this common front of the Métis was unable to beat what Father Fourmond called "the secular rivalry of the English ... and freemasonry" [translation].[124]

As the secret ballot was not introduced until 1894, voting was done openly at the time, which tended to encourage fraud. Father Fourmond reported on the situation to his superior.

> *Thus the much-desired union took place to everyone's satisfaction. It gave the victory to the French party, despite all the efforts of the English. There was general rejoicing when we learned of the election of the good Mr. Fisher, a peaceful man if there ever was one, and fluent in both French and English. Our joy was of short duration.*[125] [Translation]

According to the same witness, the returning officer Rodolphe Ouellet[126] (whom he called a freemason) deceived the voters of Batoche. In collusion with the candidate defeated at the Batoche polling station, he pretended that certain voters had misrepresented themselves and declared Mitchell the winner.

> *The returning officer, though French Canadian, was one of those venerable people who play their part only too well, all the time appearing to be extremely interested in electing French candidates by pretending to favour it ... proclaiming with hypocritical satisfaction before the witnesses to the vote count that Mr. Fisher was the legally elected representative. To our great astonishment and disappointment, we learned a few days later that Mr. Mitchell had suddenly been proclaimed the winner ....*[127] [Translation]

The disappointed Métis prepared a counterattack. During their National Day celebrations on 24 July, they held meetings in Batoche to work out a plan of action. Charles Nolin and Louis Schmidt worked together on a petition demanding that Fisher's election be confirmed and that the "traitor" Ouellet be punished.[128] The participants agreed to send this memorandum to Lieutenant-Governor Royal. The petition was presented to the territorial assembly during the fall session. In its report to the assembly on 5 December, the elections committee for its part declared that the petition did not conform to the rules.[129] On the other hand, Fisher had not gone to Regina to defend his cause and had refused to deposit $500 to lodge his appeal. The report concluded by recommending "that the controverted Election Ordinance No. 7 of 1884 be amended so as to cover the case of the petitioner against the return of H. Mitchell."[130] However, this motion was defeated by a vote of 14 to 5, and Mitchell's election was confirmed.

Father Fourmond criticized the legislative assembly's verdict in fairly strong terms. He stated that those higher up had done little to help the Métis, who were disadvantaged and destined to assimilation by a government controlled by Anglophones.[131] He particularly deplored the inaction of Lieutenant-Governor Joseph Royal, a French Canadian, whose functions gave him control over the assembly. In Royal's defence it must be said that his appointment had been badly received in the Territories and that he did not therefore feel able to intervene in an electoral issue which might well take on a "racial" character unless he had the support of the predominantly Anglophone assembly.[132]

After his election had been confirmed, Mitchell was appointed to the Lieutenant-Governor's advisory council, where he supported the claims of the Métis in his constituency concerning land grants, scrip and compensation for losses suffered in 1885.[133] Mitchell, a prosperous businessman and astute politician, did in fact have the support of several Métis, especially in the Duck Lake area. Nonetheless, he did not pursue the special interests of the Francophone population: he came out in favour of the compulsory teaching of English in school and against confessional schools, as well as against the use of French in the territorial assembly chamber.

These latter decisions came on top of other factors contributing to the decline of French in the Territories. The demographic situation of Francophones had changed since 1875, when the Métis and French Canadians together made up about half the population. In the Saskatchewan of 1885, they were in the minority. Moreover, after the events of 1885, Canadian public opinion became polarized against the Métis, who constituted the majority of that Francophone population.

MACDOWALL AND THE QUESTION OF A MÉTIS RESERVE

The federal representative of the Saskatchewan district, D.H. Macdowall, stopped in Batoche during his election tour at the end of 1889 and returned in 1890 to present a plan for establishing a Métis reserve.[134] The Métis did not favour the plan. They saw in it an attempt on the part of the government to isolate them, "to want to treat the Métis like Indians" [translation].[135] In addition, they associated the plan with the government's immigration policy, which was to encircle the Métis and offer the surrounding lands to immigrants. The question was debated at several assemblies in the district. The St. Laurent committee supported the plan, but it was rejected in Duck Lake and, more resoundingly, in Batoche. The clergy were in favour of "reserves" rather than granting scrips, which earned them the charge of having sold out to the government.[136] For the Métis, it was above all a question of pride and traditional independence. Among the few supporters of the plan were Charles Nolin and Fathers Fourmond, Moulin and Dommeau. Among the more numerous adversaries figured the new territorial representative for Batoche, Charles-Eugène Boucher[137] and others whom Father Fourmond called "ringleaders and drunkards from Batoche" [translation].[138]

In his correspondence, Macdowall did not show much understanding of Métis rights. Macdowall was mainly preoccupied with his re-election and with keeping the Macdonald government in power, but being an astute politician, he claimed to support the claims of the Métis population of his constituency. He considered them "a political factor"[139] and wrote to Sir John A.:

> *In urging you to take steps for the settlement of this question [the land question, or that of granting scrips to the Métis born between 1870 and 1885], I do so, not because the halfbreeds are legally entitled to such a settlement but in the interest of peace and good government.*[140]

He won in the federal election of 1891, defeating the Liberal candidate by a plurality of almost three hundred votes.[141] But he did not succeed in obtaining the general support of the Métis.

THE SETBACKS OF THE 1890S

Boucher's Election

The territorial election of 1891 created much more of a stir if not more controversy than the preceding federal election. The candidates in Batoche were Charles Nolin and Charles-Eugène Boucher. Nolin had had some political experience, even though he had lost the confidence of some people. His opponent was young and dynamic and came from a family well known in the district. Nolin was defeated and successfully contested the result with the Lieutenant-Governor and the Assembly. The election campaign and the events of the following months upset the community.[142] Nolin thus occupied the seat during the first session, but an appeal lodged by Boucher was followed by an inquiry which found in his favour.[143] Georges Fisher's experience had perhaps served as a bad precedent. Charles-Eugène Boucher, son-in-law of Xavier Letendre, probably had more resources, both political and personal ones. Even though there were no officially recognized political parties in the territorial assembly, Boucher was an avowed Conservative. He took advantage of the support of Lieutenant-Governor Royal, who was a friend of the family.

As one of two French-speaking representatives in the territorial assembly, Boucher tried in vain to win the right to use French in the chamber and to preserve the French school rights which had been in force since 1875. In 1892, the official use of French was abolished in the Territories, and the following year, an amendment to the school act revoked bilingualism and made English the only language of teaching.[144] These measures with their disastrous consequences for the expansion of the French language and the preservation of the Métis and French-Canadian community were part of the English policy to "anglicize ... anglicize ...."[145] On several occasions, Boucher also acted as an interpreter for his fellow citizens. In 1893, he again introduced a resolution demanding just compensation for the losses suffered by the Métis during the insurrection of 1885. He explained that

> *... in respect of property destroyed or confiscated by Canadian militia at close of rebellion which has been refused by Government of Canada on ground that such persons were rebels whereas at time of such destruction or confiscation all hostilities had ceased and rebellion was entirely at an end, and said persons were living quietly and peaceably at their homes ....*[146]

His resolution was adopted by the assembly and sent on to the Canadian government. He also claimed the right to scrip and especially its extension to the Métis born after 1870.[147]

Charles-Eugène Boucher was re-elected in 1894 with 25 votes more than David Venne, notary and postmaster of Batoche. There is no evidence of intense rivalry or resentment as in 1891.[148] This election was held by secret ballot, nicknamed "Oliver ballot" after representative Frank Oliver, who had proposed that the legislative assembly adopt such a voting method.[149]

In 1897, the executive council became responsible to the legislative assembly. In a sense, the territorial government thus acquired ministerial responsibility. Representative Boucher was not particularly involved in this question. He saw no advantages in it for his compatriots, but rather for F.W.G. Haultain and his partisans, opponents of the Francophone minority, who were coming into power.[150] Boucher sat on the advisory committee on agriculture. He was thus able to dispense certain favours in his constituency, especially in the form of construction and development programs. During his two mandates in the legislature, his work consisted in fact in distributing slices of political patronage.

The Liberal Victories

The federal election of 1896 brought important changes in representation and ushered in the Liberal era. The Liberal candidate T.O. Davis was opposed by the Conservative James McKay.[151] But the Liberal leader Wilfrid Laurier, uncertain of his election in Quebec, ran in place of Davis with the latter's consent in the Prince Albert West constituency. The Métis in the constituency were almost unanimous in their support of Davis. In the election of June 1896, Laurier won over McKay by 988 votes to 944.[152] Having also been elected in his Quebec East constituency, the Liberal leader gave up his Western seat, and Davis won the by-election in December by a plurality of 175 votes. He kept his seat until 1904.

The Liberals had worked hard during the campaign to attract the Métis and Francophone votes.[153] The Métis were said to be "Red like fire."[154] Charles "Le Marquis" Fisher[155] of Duck Lake was the Liberal candidate in the Batoche constituency in the territorial election of 1898. He won over his compatriot, Jean-Baptiste Boucher, brother of the former representative. The rivalry between the two candidates never reached the intensity of the Boucher-Nolin fight. They made more or less the same demands, that is, scrips and increased economic development programs for the district. In the federal election of 1900, the Liberal Davis was almost the unanimous choice of Batoche: only eight votes went to his opponent Spencer.

Despite the internal rivalries which lessened its impact, the Métis population of the Batoche constituency exercised some political power between 1888 and 1908. However, after the turn of the century, their power declined slowly but surely. William F. Grant,[156] a Batoche merchant, was the Liberal candidate at the first provincial election in December 1905. He received 983 votes to 120 for Boucher, the largest majority ever given to a member of the territorial legislature. Grant was an honest representative who showed great consideration for the Métis. In 1907, he offered his seat to the new Attorney-General Alphonse Turgeon,[157] stating that he did not hesitate to resign in favour of a French-speaking Catholic. However, Turgeon succeeded in getting himself elected in the city of Prince Albert in December 1907, and in the general election of the following year in the new constituency of Duck Lake, which included Batoche.

After 1908, there was a rapid decline in the political power of Batoche and the neighbouring Francophone parishes. The southeastern part of the Duck Lake constituency lacked political organization, and for this or other reasons it did not receive its share of patronage. The turn of the century witnessed the exodus of several Métis towards settlements further to the North-West. Another phenomenon, that of immigration, helped to "swamp" the Métis population and reduce its influence. The arrival of Ukrainians (Galicians), Poles, Germans and Mennonites in the area had the effect of further isolating them. Efforts to increase the Francophone population met with some success: a few hundred French nationals, French Canadians and Belgians settled in Duck Lake, Domrémy and Bellevue. In Batoche, they succeeded at the very least in avoiding "the shipwreck of Fish Creek."[158] But this Francophone population, dispersed and divided as it was, did not succeed in reconstituting itself politically.

Notes

Political Action, 1873-1910

1 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1873 [Father André]. The president was assisted by eight councillors. All regulations were subject to approval by the assembly. The council was the sole local authority in the area from 1873 to 1875, and subsequently it became a kind of "parish council." It testified to the political awareness and desire for self-government among the Métis. The chronicle necessarily emphasizes the key role of Father André in the council's activities.

2 One council was organized in the Qu'Appelle area under the direction of John Fisher and another in St. Albert. Neither enjoyed the prestige or authority of the St. Laurent council.

3 George F.G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), p. 180.

4 The St. Laurent council was not, properly speaking, a provisional government as defined by Stanley. Athough it was not meant to be anti-Canadian in any way, it was based on the natural right of the first occupants to govern themselves and initiate any form of civil authority.

5 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1875 [Father André].

6 George F.G. Stanley, "The Half-Breed Rising of 1875," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (December 1936), p. 399-412; ibid., *The Birth of Western Canada* pp. 181-182.

7 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1875 [Father André].

8 Loc. cit.

9 L.H. Thomas, in *The Struggle for Responsible Government in the North West Territories, 1870-1897* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), ch. 3, discusses in depth the nature and weaknesses of this administration, particularly its lack of legislative and fiscal power.

10 Pascal Breland (originally Berland dit Boishué), a Cypress Hills merchant but residing in Manitoba, was a member of the first council in 1872-75. His appointment as a Métis representative to the new council sitting in Battleford dated from 1878, following a petition by the St. Laurent Métis "for one of their own." On the other hand, no St. Laurent Métis was appointed to that council. Breland kept his seat until 1888, the date of the first general election and the creation of the legislative assembly.

11 Breland was already 66 in 1878. He had received some political training as a member of the Assiniboia council in Red River from 1857 to 1869 and subsequently as a member of the first legislative assembly of Manitoba from 1870 to 1874. He was married to Maria, daughter of Cuthbert Grant. His marriage into the Grant family made him an ally of the Hudson's Bay Company and the more "conservative" faction among the Métis, the one advocating the "status quo." On the other hand, the members of the Dumont-Ouellette-Lépine-Gariépy clan in Saskatchewan were more "to the left" and supported the platform adopted by Riel in Red River in 1869-70. They said of Breland "that the government would have pushed him aside if he had known how to represent us" [translation] ("Mémorial des Métis de Saint-Laurent, Batoche, Saint-Louis, juin 1884," presented by Bishop V.-J. Grandin to Sir John A. Macdonald, NA, MG26 A, Vol. 105).

12 Joseph Royal, Quebec journalist and politician, settled in Manitoba in 1870, where he founded the newspaper *Le Métis*. He was a member of the Manitoba legislature from 1871 to 1879 and subsequently the federal member for Provencher until 1888. He was Lieutenant-Governor of the North West Territories from 1888 to 1893. This appointment displeased Anglophones, and Royal felt that it was difficult for him to intervene on his compatriots' behalf.

On the other hand, Pierre Delorme and James McKay (Macaille) were Métis of considerable wealth and a reputation for honesty in Manitoba. But they did not sit on the council after it was reconstituted in 1878. They were considered the "Métis elite," whose interests did not for the most part coincide with those of the Saskatchewan hunters and traders.

13 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of Fathers André, Fourmond, Lacombe, Lestanc, Moulin and Végréville, 1868-1900 (hereafter cited as Letters of the Fathers), Father Lacombe to Bishop Taché, St-Paul-des-Cris, 12 September 1870.

14 Among others, there were Royal, Dubuc, Girard, Delorme and McKay; but they were always in the minority, and the appointment in 1872 of John C. Schultz, an avowed enemy of the Métis, testified to their political weakness.

15 There were some longer-term plans for legislative and fiscal reform with a view to creating an assembly. See L.H. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 75-79.

16 SABS, *Journal of the Legislative Council of the North-West Territories* (1878).

17 Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Debates* (1878), Vol. 5, Hon. D. Mills vs Hon. L.H. Langevin, Questions about the administration of the North West Territories, 8 May 1878, pp. 2542-2544. The Métis of the Territories were said to be generally ignorant and incapable of assuming political responsibilities. On the other hand, L.H. Thomas (op. cit., p. 92) claims that Pascal Breland was "an amiable non-entity" without any administrative talent.

18 SABS, *Journal of the Legislative Council of the North West Territories* (1878-79), Appendix A; PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1880 [Father André].

19 *Saskatchewan Herald* (Battleford), 23 February 1880.

20 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1881 [Father André]; PAM, MG9, A31, Memoirs of Louis Schmidt, 1912, p. 97.

21 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1879 [Father André].

22 Among the Métis involved were Peter Erasmus, James McKay and Pierre Léveillé.

23 The closeness of the Métis settlements facilitated interaction between the two. The parish registers of Sacré-Coeur/St-Sacrement (Duck Lake) and Ste-Anne near Carlton attest to several marriages between Métis and Amerindians. But according to A. Morris (*Treaties of Canada with the Indians* [Toronto: Coles, 1971], pp. 186-187), the Métis were not encouraged to participate in the treaty or to settle on the reserves.

24 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1876 [Father André].

25 Loc. cit.

26 They included Isidore and Jean Dumont and Xavier (Letanger) [sic] Letendre; A. Morris, op. cit., appendix, p. 357.

27 Batoche and vicinity constituted a distinct constituency from 1888 to 1908.

28 See in particular the Prince Albert *Times* from September 1884 to March 1885 and the Battleford *Herald* for 12 July 1884.

29 The 1881 census was too early and too general to allow us to deduce even an approximate number. In a memoir written in 1883, Father André put the population of Batoche itself at 500. See DA, Alexis André, "Mémorial en réponse au questionnaire du R.P. Visiteur, automne 1883."

30 Day Hort Macdowall of Prince Albert represented the Lorne constituency from 1883 to 1885. He was replaced by Owen E. Hughes from 1885 to 1888. The latter, also of Prince Albert, had married a halfbreed, Mary Inkster. He had more support than his predecessor from the Métis of the Batoche area.

31 Journalist by profession and a Liberal in politics, David Laird was Minister of the Interior in the Mackenzie government from 1873 to 1876. In 1876, he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the North West Territories, a position he occupied until 1881. He was succeeded by Edgar Dewdney (1881-88) when John A. Macdonald appointed him Minister of the Interior and Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Laird was generally more favourable to the political demands of the Métis. In view of the growing Métis population, the Lorne district would have been entitled to another representative in 1883. But Governor Dewdney did not accept this demand.

32 Born in St. François-Xavier, Louis Schmidt dit Laferté emigrated to Saskatchewan in 1880. In 1858, Bishop Taché sent him to Quebec to pursue his studies, at the same time as Louis Riel and Daniel McDougall. He returned to Red River in 1861. Schmidt was secretary in Louis Riel's provisional government. But after the events of 1870, he stayed away from politics even though he sat as a member for St. Boniface West from 1870 to 1874 and for St. François-Xavier in 1878-79. He took a plot of land in St. Louis, and in 1882 he was appointed justice of the peace for the district. He was a member of the conservative and bourgeois faction among the Métis and did not support Riel and Dumont in the 1885 uprising.

33 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letter of Louis Schmidt to A.M. Burgess, 6 May 1885; ibid., Louis Schmidt, "Mouvement des Métis à Saint-Laurent, Saskatchewan, Territoires du Nord-Ouest, en 1884."

34 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1883 [Father André].

35 SBAA, Father André to Sir John A. Macdonald, Winter 1882-83 (copy in Taché Papers).

36 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of Louis Schmidt to Bishop Taché, 1861-93, St-Louis-de-Langevin, 8 April 1885. The clergy were opposed to Philippe Garnot's candidacy because of his resistance to civil and religious authority.

37 J.A. Gemmill, ed., *The Canadian Parliamentary Companion* (Ottawa, 1885), p. 368: Macdowall received 279 votes and Dr. Porter 120.

38 SBAA, Journal of Father Gabriel Cloutier: Charles Nolin's and Maxime Lépine's depositions, p. 5177. Among those present were Xavier Letendre, Gabriel Dumont, Michel Dumas, Baptiste Boyer, Moïse Ouellette and Jean-Baptiste Boucher, as well as the halfbreeds Charles Adams, Thomas Scott and Henry Monkman. The clergy had not been invited.

39 Ibid., pp. 5174-5176 and Charles Nolin's testimony, NA, RG13, B2, C-1231. These first assemblies were held at Baptiste Boyer's and Abraham Montour's. A subsequent meeting with the halfbreeds took place in the spruce grove opposite Maxime Lépine's house mid-way between St. Laurent and St. Louis.

40 SBAA, Journal of Father Gabriel Cloutier, p. 5176. This meeting took place at the home of Isidore Dumont, father of Gabriel. The participants abandoned the idea of sending a delegation to Ottawa and opted only for a meeting with Riel. According to Nolin's testimony, the emissaries were authorized to explain the grievances to him and to invite him if they deemed it necessary.

41 The meeting in Prince Albert was a success despite Lawrence Clarke's and D.H. Macdowall's opposition and Father André's fears.

42 See ch. 2, "Relations with the Clergy," section on Clerical Intervention.

43 NA, MG26, A, John A. Macdonald Papers, Vol. 105, June 1884, "Mémorial présenté par l'entremise de Mgr Grandin."

44 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father André to Bishop Taché, 6 January 1883.

45 Ibid., Louis Schmidt, "Mouvement des Métis à Saint-Laurent, Saskatchewan, Territoires du Nord-Ouest, en 1884." The visit took place on 19 August. Although Judge Rouleau was a French Canadian, he was not sympathetic to Métis claims. See GA, Edgar Dewdney Papers, Vol. 6, Charles B. Rouleau to E. Dewdney, 5 September 1884. After the failure of the rebellion in 1885, he sentenced 11 Amerindians to death by hanging at Fort Battleford. Another French-Canadian, Amédée Forget, secretary to Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney, visited Riel in Father André's presence in September. Although he considered Riel a threat to established governmental authority, he showed more delicacy. In 1886, he sat on the Commission on Rebellion Losses.

46 SBAA, Taché Papers, Louis Schmidt, "Mouvement des Métis à Saint-Laurent ... en 1884."

47 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1884 [Father Fourmond].

48 SBAA, Taché Papers, Louis Schmidt, "Mouvement des Métis à Saint-Laurent ... en 1884"; NA, MG27, IC4, Edgar Dewdney Papers, Vol. 4, D.H. Macdowall to E. Dewdney, 24 December 1884; ibid., MG26, A, Vol. 107, Father André to E. Dewdney, 21 January 1885.

49 Among the "hotheads" he mentioned Philippe Garnot, Norbert Delorme, Michel Dumas and Damase Carrière.

50 DA, microfilm 710 of SBAA, "Notes d'un Père de Prince-Albert" [Father Végréville], 17 August 1884.

51 Ibid., 15 September 1884.

52 DA, Letters of the Fathers to the Sisters of the Visitation of Le Mans (hereafter Le Mans), Father Fourmond to Mother Gertrude, 17 September 1884.

53 *Le Manitoba*, 18 October 1884.

54 Riel formed a provisional government and declared war on the Canadian government on 18 March 1885. This government, which he considered *ex necessitate*, was composed of a president and an executive of 15 members, who remained active until 12 May 1885, the last day of the Battle of Batoche. It was less important than the provisional government of Red River and Manitoba, which had exercised power from 8 December 1869 to 24 August 1870 and had been legally recognized by the Canadian authorities.

55 DA, Le Mans, Father Fourmond to Mother Gertrude, 15 June 1885; SBAA, Journal of Father Gabriel Cloutier, 1886, Father Fourmond's testimony. In his memoirs, Philippe Garnot states that Colonel Williams sent him to fetch the flag (SHSBA, Memoirs of Philippe Garnot, 1886). Father Fourmond gives the most precise description of the flag adopted by the Saskatchewan Métis in 1885. There are other versions, including the one proposed by Peter Charlebois in *The Life of Louis Riel* (Toronto: New Canada Publications, 1975), p. 196. "François Marion's flag" (photograph preserved in the Fort Battleford National Historic Park library), which incorporates the British Union Jack, dates from 1910, the year the Union Nationale Métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba was reorganized. François Marion of St. Vital was a member of the executive. Mrs. Marion reportedly made the flag, and it was then presented to the Batoche chapter (SHSBA, Union Nationale Métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba, Minutes, 1887-1930).

56 DA, Le Mans, Father Fourmond to Mother Gertrude, 27 September 1884.

57 On this subject, see Antoine Champagne, *Les La Vérendrye et le poste de l'Ouest* (Québec: Laval University Press, 1968), pp. 39, 211, 219 and illustration facing p. 282.

58 GA, Faithful Companions of Jesus Collection, Journal of the St. Laurent House, 24 April 1885.

59 C.P. Mulvaney, *The History of the North-West Rebellion of 1885* (Toronto: A.H. Hovey, 1886), p. 275.

60 NA, MG27, I, F3, Vol. 2, No. 49.

61 DA, Le Mans, Father Fourmond to Mother Gertrude, 22 September 1884. The author of the "national hymn" is unknown.

62 EAA, Letters of Bishop V.J. Grandin to J. Moulin, 3 November 1899.

63 NA, RG15, Vol. 335, file 83808.

64 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father Végréville to Bishop Taché, 26 February 1885. Father Fourmond reports that it was manifest that, while the ministers were well disposed towards the Métis, they did not want to deal with Riel, on the pretext that he was a naturalized American, but in reality because "they hated and feared him" [translation] (PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1885 [Father Fourmond]).

65 PAM, MG9, A31, Memoirs of Louis Schmidt, 1912, p. 101-102, SBAA, Journal of Father Gabriel Cloutier, 1886, p. 5174: Charles Nolin's and Maxime Lépine's testimonies.

66 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1885 [Father Fourmond]; ibid., 1884.

67 It was called thus to distinguish it from the provisional government of 1869-70 in Manitoba.

68 The first combat of the "North-West Rebellion" which opposed Prince Albert volunteers and the North-West Mounted Police to Gabriel Dumont's Métis took place in Duck Lake on 26 March 1885. The Métis emerged as the winners. This outcome finally forced the government into action.

69 For a detailed account of the Battle of Batoche, see Walter Hildebrandt, *The Battle of Batoche: British Small Warfare and the Entrenched Métis* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1985).

70 See the account of the trial in Desmond Morton, ed., *The Queen vs Louis Riel* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974). The most notorious example was Charles Nolin's testimony.

71 This term was used in a fairly wide sense, to designate either a Liberal or a radical or a non-Conservative (non-Blue).

72 GA, Edgar Dewdney Papers, Vol. 5, J. Anderson to E. Dewdney, 25 November 1885.

73 Ibid., Report of a Mr. Badger to Thomas White, cited in a letter from Sir H. Langevin to E. Dewdney, 28 October 1885.

74 Ibid., A. McKay to E. Dewdney, 8 January 1886.

75 Loc. cit.

76 Ibid., M. Nichol to E. Dewdney, 13 May 1886.

77 Ibid., Vol. 3, E. Dewdney to John A. Macdonald, 2 and 13 March 1886.

78 PAA, OMI, Journal of Brother Célestin Guillet, Brother Némoz to Brother Guillet, 8 May 1887.

79 O.D. Skelton, *Life and Letters of Sir W. Laurier* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1981, reprint) [Carleton Library Series, No. 21], Vol. 1: "1841-1896," p. 85.

80 Arthur Silver, "French Québec and the Métis Question, 1869-1885," Carl Berger and Ramsay Cook, eds., *The West and the Nation: Essays in Honour of W.L. Morton* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), pp. 102-106. See the reports in *Le Manitoba* (St. Boniface), a conservative Catholic weekly, during the summer of 1885. One could also mention Judge Joseph Dubuc's withdrawal from the case: his refusal to hear the appeal lodged at the Court of Queen's Bench in Manitoba. On the other hand, Honoré Mercier and after him his family came to the aid of Louis Riel's children. The funds were collected mainly in Quebec, not in Manitoba.

81 See the Métis testimony gathered by Father Cloutier in Batoche in 1886 (SBAA, Journal of Father Gabriel Cloutier), particularly that of Philippe Gariépy, p. 5171, Charles Nolin and Maxime Lépine, pp. 5174-5175, as well as Father Fourmond's account, p. 5096.

82 Testimony gathered in Batoche during conversations held in 1978, 1979 and 1981.

83 PAM, MG3, C14, Capt. George H. Young, Notes re Royal Commission on Rebellion Losses, 1886.

84 Queen's University Archives, George H. Young Papers, book C, Notes accompanying declarations of losses suffered in 1885. The commission also had at its disposal documents seized in Batoche as well as testimony from the Regina trials.

85 See Desmond Morton, ed., op. cit. See also testimony of several witnesses in a confidential report by Superintendent Perry, 29 August 1887: SABS, Department of the Attorney-General, Series "G" (hereafter cited as At "G"), file 4344.

86 SHSBA, Frémont Papers, Memoirs of Philippe Garnot, 1886.

87 Loc. cit.

88 SAB (Regina), C-Y 861, "Champagne vs Queen," Testimony of G.H. Young in Exchequer Court, Winnipeg, 14 September 1892, pp. 15, 26.

89 NA, RG15, Vol. 632, file 237041, Father Gariépy to John A. Macdonald, 22 November 1889.

90 There were no official parties in the Territories in 1886, but the Métis favoured Laird (a liberal) rather than Macdowall, the (conservative) government candidate.

91 SBAA, Taché Papers, Letters of the Fathers, Father Fourmond to Bishops Taché and Grandin, 20 October 1886.

92 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1885 [Father Fourmond].

93 J.A. Gemmill, ed., op. cit., p. 381. Hughes received 141 votes and Porter 133.

94 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1886 [Father Fourmond].

95 Ibid., 1887.

96 NA, RG15, Vol. 632, file 236942, D.H. Macdowall to A.M. Burgess, 19 July 1890. He supported the demand for scrip, but out of self-interest rather than conviction. Being first and foremost a disciple of John A. Macdonald, this affiliation caused him to be viewed with distrust in the Métis parishes.

97 NA, RG15, Vol. 510, file 144363.

98 Octave Régner (ca. 1852-1899), a native of Quebec, emigrated from St. François-Xavier, Manitoba, to St. Louis in 1882. He became a teacher and briefly Riel's secretary in 1885. Jean Caron Sr. (ca. 1833-1905), born in St. Norbert, Manitoba, lived since 1881 on lot 52, next to the St-Antoine-de-Padoue mission. Level-headed and peaceful, he nevertheless took up arms in 1885, just like his elder sons. He supported the Conservatives in 1887, but changed sides in 1888.

99 In particular, they rejected the offer of seed grain that had certain strings attached to it.

100 NA, RG15, Vol. 510, file 144363, Confidential Memorandum of T. White, Minister of the Interior, to Privy Council, 23 May 1887.

101 SABS, At "G," file 3744, "Pétition des habitants de Saint-Antoine-de-Padoue au lieutenant-gouverneur Dewdney, 13 mai 1887."

102 After the fall, Gabriel Dumont took refuge in Montana. He then went to New York State where he talked with politicians and gave lectures with the aim of sensitizing the American people to the condition of his Métis compatriots. Fearing that he had been excluded from the October 1886 amnesty, he hesitated about going back to Canada. He

visited the Riel family in St. Vital, Manitoba, in 1888, went to Batoche in the spring of 1889 and settled down again around that time. He stayed in "his country" until his death in 1906. For an account of the last years in the life of Gabriel Dumont, see G. Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1975), pp. 245-251.

103 This correspondence with Maxime Lépine, Alex Fisher and Philippe Garnot in 1887-88 was carried on mainly with a view to drafting a petition to Wilfrid Laurier and the Liberals (see NA, MG26, G, Vol. 2). Dumont wrote mainly through his Franco-American friend E. Riboulet, with whom he was staying. Dumont's letters (or copies of them), which were fortunately not compromising, were passed on to the North-West Mounted Police by Maxime Lépine with the promise that they would not be published. In view of the confidential nature of the correspondence, Lépine's rather dishonest act is an indication of the fear and division rampant in the community. On the other hand, the Métis involved had perhaps been intimidated by the police, for the latter distrusted Dumont and watched his activities and his comings and goings (see GA, Edgar Dewdney Papers, Vol. 6). These letters had been handed over to Col. Herchmer, who sent them to his superior F. White. The latter passed them on to Dewdney.

104 There were few other options in 1888. Dumont tried repeatedly to revive the possibility of armed action during his visits to Métis camps and settlements in Dakota and Manitoba. But the Métis were dispersed and disorganized. He also tried in vain to obtain the support and intervention of the American authorities. See GA, Edgar Dewdney Papers, Vol. 6, p. 1563.

105 Ibid., p. 1605. (The French originals of Dumont's letters have been lost. All that remains today is their English translations.)

106 SBAA, Taché Papers, Jean Caron to Father G. Cloutier, 18 March 1887.

107 NA, MG26, G, Vol. 737, pp. 208184-208187, Alex Fisher to W. Laurier, 17 December 1887.

108 Ibid., p. 208186.

109 Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 669-670. Alex Fisher to W. Laurier, 7 March 1888.

110 Ibid., p. 671, Alex Fisher to G. Dumont, 7 March 1888.

111 See ch. 2, "Relations with the Clergy," note 64.

112 Charles Nolin's second wife was Rosaline Lépine, cousin of Maxime. One of Maxime's sons, Patrice, married Lucie Nolin, Charles's daughter, in 1892. It is interesting to note that Howard Adams (great-grandson of Lépine) does not admit that there was an

understanding between Nolin and Lépine. According to him, the only "traitors" were Nolin and Garnot. See Howard Adams, *Prison of Grass* (Toronto: General Publishing, 1975), pp. 91-100.

113 Philippe Gariépy had supported the Liberals in 1887. According to Alex Fisher, he had been bought by the Conservatives who had offered him a contract for installing telegraph poles. See NA, MG26, G, Vol. 2, A. Fisher to W. Laurier, 7 March 1888, p. 670.

114 Emmanuel Champagne (1820-1904), born in St. Norbert, Manitoba, was married to Marie Letendre, Xavier's aunt. A merchant in the Batoche area since 1878, he was doing well in 1885. His house and stores were looted by soldiers after the battle in 1885. Embittered against a government which did not deal fairly either with his claim in particular or with Métis claims in general, he opted for the liberal line or a leftist platform.

115 The petition was received by the House of Commons on 19 April 1888, but was not printed. See Canada, Parliament, *Journal of the House of Commons* (1888), (Ottawa: A. Sénécal), Vol. 22, p. 199. The Laurier Collection does not contain the original or final text. A translation in the Pearce Collection (UAA, MG9/2) is almost identical in content if not form with the petition dated 17 December 1887. See NA, MG26, G, Vol. 737, pp. 208184-208185.

116 The first petition sent in February was unsigned. In a letter to Laurier, which attests to his difficulties with his committee, Fisher advised him that two petitions had been drafted in February, one by Lépine and the other by himself, and that the latter had been accepted by the committee. Fisher stated that he had been tricked and that Lépine's petition had been substituted for his own. Laurier sent it back to him, and Fisher advised him that he would let him have another copy of his petition in the hope that it would arrive before the end of the session. See NA, MG26, G, Vol. 2, A. Fisher to W. Laurier, 20 March 1888.

117 Ibid., Vol. 737, pp. 671-672.

118 NA, MG26, G, Vol. 2, 14 March 1888, pp. 676-696. The text is an exhaustive account of the events of 1885 and their antecedents. Fisher presents a personal and original report of the progress of the Battle of Batoche, which reflects the point of view of the Métis. He is naturally critical of the Conservatives. Moreover, he paints a very interesting picture of Batoche politics and society during the years after the insurrection. Fisher writes in "Métchif," which adds to the originality and significance of his report.

119 UAA, MG9/2, William Pearce Papers, John R. Hall to William Pearce, Ottawa, 5 May 1888. He objected in particular to the granting of lands and scrips to Métis born between 1870 and 1885.

120 *The Consolidated Ordinances of the North-West Territories, 1898* (Regina: Queen's Printer, 1899), pp. 12-13. St. Louis was incorporated into the Kinistino constituency.

121 NA, RG15, Vol. 589, file 198086. Reply to the petition of Xavier Letendre and signatories, Ottawa, 5 March 1889.

122 For a detailed analysis of this question, see ch. 4, "The Economy," section on Agriculture.

123 They did not represent a particular political party, even though it could be said that Mitchell represented the (conservative) government while Fisher was more liberal. It was only in the 1898 election that the candidates for the territorial assembly affiliated themselves to a political party or grouping.

124 DA, Letters of Fathers André, Fourmond, Moulin, Végréville to the Superior-General in Rome, 1878-1900 (hereafter Rome), Father Fourmond, 5 January 1889.

125 Loc. cit.; the official figure was 82 votes against 65: see J.A. Gemmill, ed., op. cit., p. 397.

126 He was not a member of the Ouellette family of St. Laurent, but a French Canadian from the "outside," who had arrived only a short while before from Quebec. He was employed by Mitchell in the Stobart, Eden & Co. store.

127 DA, Rome, Father Fourmond, 15 January 1889; PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1888 [Father Fourmond].

128 Ibid.

129 SABS, *Journals of Legislative Assembly of North West Territories* (Regina: R.B. Gordon, 1888) (hereafter cited as *NWT Legislative Assembly*), Vol. 1, p. 90, "Report of Standing Committee on Privilege and Elections."

130 Ibid., p. 91.

131 DA, Rome, Father Fourmond, 15 January 1889.

132 Loc. cit.

133 SABS, *NWT Legislative Assembly*, Vol. 1, p. 75.

134 NA, MG25, A, Vol. 335, pp. 151350A-151361, D.H. Macdowall to John A. Macdonald, 12 April 1890; PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1890 [Father Fourmond]. He was accompanied by O.E. Hughes, a former member of the territorial legislature, James McKay, a Prince Albert lawyer and Métis, and R.S. Mckenzie, an Indian agent in the Duck Lake district.

135 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1890 [Father Fourmond].

136 See the more detailed discussion of the clergy's position on reserves and scrips in ch. 5, "Land Claims in the South Saskatchewan River Area."

137 Son of Jean-Baptiste Boucher and Caroline Lespérance, he was born in St. François-Xavier, Manitoba, in 1864. In 1882, he emigrated with his family to St. Louis, Saskatchewan. In 1884-85, he was a clerk in Xavier Letendre's store in Batoche. Unlike his father and several of his brothers, he did not participate in the insurrection of 1885. In 1886, he married Hélène Letendre, daughter of Xavier. From 1891 to 1898, he sat in the territorial legislature as a representative for the Batoche constituency. Afterwards, he stayed briefly in Montana and then returned to St. Louis, where he settled down to farming and ranching. He was a well-known singer, and some of his compositions are today part of the local folklore. He died in 1926.

138 This was the categorical way to describe all those who opposed plans for a Métis reserve. The charge was fairly serious. It was customary to offer alcoholic drink during a political campaign or cabal.

139 NA, MG26, A, Vol. 335, p. 151360, D.H. Macdowall to John A. Macdonald, 12 April 1890.

140 Ibid., p. 151359A. In all fairness, Macdowall was expressing the common opinion of his contemporaries about the Métis.

141 J.A. Gemmill, ed., op. cit., p. 194.

142 Election campaigns were very lively, especially during these years, because the successful candidate had patronage to dispense. Nolin and Boucher differed mainly on scrips and on creating a Métis reserve in Batoche, Boucher being in favour of obtaining scrips and against establishing a reserve. He represented the point of view of the younger Métis.

143 SABS, *NWT Legislative Assembly*, Vol. 5, Session of 2 August to 1 September 1892, p. 9. Boucher was declared elected in August 1892. The journals of the assembly do not go into this question. On the other hand, the Prince Albert *Times* of 11 November 1891 reports that the voting took place in doubtful circumstances, that the polling station was open before eight o'clock, that several votes were rejected, and that the register was removed from the polling station. Several legal proceedings followed, including one against Francis Tourond for perjury. He was accused of voting in a constituency in which he did not have the right to vote. See the *Times*, 16 December 1891.

144 The record shows only four members opposed to the motion. Among them were the two Francophone representatives: Boucher (Batoche) and Prince (St. Albert). French was banished from the assembly and could be taught only in primary school. This motion by F.W.G. Haultain, member of the territorial assembly from 1888 to 1905 and opponent of the Catholic Francophone minority, could be cited as one of the political repercussions of 1885 and the abolition of French in Manitoba in 1890. See L.H. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 208, 214. However, it is important to emphasize that the 1891 bill to make English the only official language was never proclaimed. Since Saskatchewan was created out of the Territories in 1905, it may therefore be maintained that French is still legally an official language of the legislative assembly and before the courts.

145 DA, Rome, Father Fourmond, St. Laurent, 15 January 1889.

146 SABS, *NWT Legislative Assembly*, Vol. 7, 1893, p. 97.

147 Ibid., 1894, p. 93.

148 It is interesting to note that the two candidates were "related" (by marriage). David Venne's brother Bruno was married to Florestine Letendre, sister of Hélène Boucher (née Letendre).

149 L.H. Thomas, op. cit., p. 243.

150 H. Mitchell, former member for Batoche (1888-91) and member for Mitchell (which included Duck Lake) from 1891 to 1898, was a member of the executive council under Haultain. He supported Haultain on the abolition of French.

151 The Liberal Thomas Osborne Davis, merchant and mayor of Prince Albert, was a controversial figure. His main support came from rural voters, as well as the population of Batoche and other Métis parishes. For more on him, see D.J. Hall, "T.O. Davis and Federal Politics in Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Spring 1977), pp. 56-62. In 1904, he was appointed to the Senate. James McKay, the Conservative candidate in 1895, was a halfbreed or "English Métis." A Prince Albert lawyer, he was supported by urban voters. The French Métis population distrusted him, especially because of his pro-government position during the insurrection of 1885. However, he had some support among members of the Métis bourgeoisie, including Xavier Letendre and Charles Nolin.

152 J.A. Gemmill, ed., op. cit., p. 202.

153 Laurier campaigned personally in the West in 1893-94. He visited Prince Albert (Saskatchewan electoral district) with the aim of consolidating the position of the Liberals, who came to power in 1896. Israël Tarte, Minister of Public Works, visited Batoche and other

Francophone centres where he presented the Liberals' bill to restore the teaching of French. On land rights and the distribution of scrips, see ch. 5, "Land Claims ..."

154 PAA, OMI, Journal of Brother Célestin Guillet, Batoche, 1 November 1900.

155 Son of Georges Fisher, fur merchant of Fort Qu'Appelle, and Emilie Boyer, he was born in St. François-Xavier in 1865. His elder brother Georges Jr. was a candidate in Batoche in 1888. Charles studied at St. Boniface College and at St. John's College in Winnipeg. He was a member of the legislative assembly from 1898 to 1905. He was appointed Indian agent at Mistawasis and subsequently at the Department of Indian Affairs in Ottawa. He died in Duck Lake in 1907.

156 Of Scottish extraction, he married Catherine Henry (a Métis) in Fish Creek in 1905. After opening a store in that locality around 1890, he rented Letendre's store in Batoche around the turn of the century and ran it together with his brother Donald.

157 A native of New Brunswick, Turgeon was an Anglophone who had learned French as an adult and returned to his native culture. The difficulties of getting a Catholic French Canadian elected in the predominantly Protestant Anglophone constituency of Prince Albert City prompted Grant to take this step. See Grant's letter to Premier Scott, 13 October 1907, cited in P. Morissette, "La carrière politique de W.F.A. Turgeon," M.A. thesis, University of Regina, 1975, p. 61. This thesis gives an interesting analysis of Turgeon's career, a man regarded by his compatriots and co-religionists as their official representative to the Scott and Martin governments from 1907 to 1921.

158 PADA, Correspondence of Father Pierre E. Myre, Father Myre to Bishop Prud'homme, 5 March 1934, St-Antoine-de-Padoue Parish, Batoche.

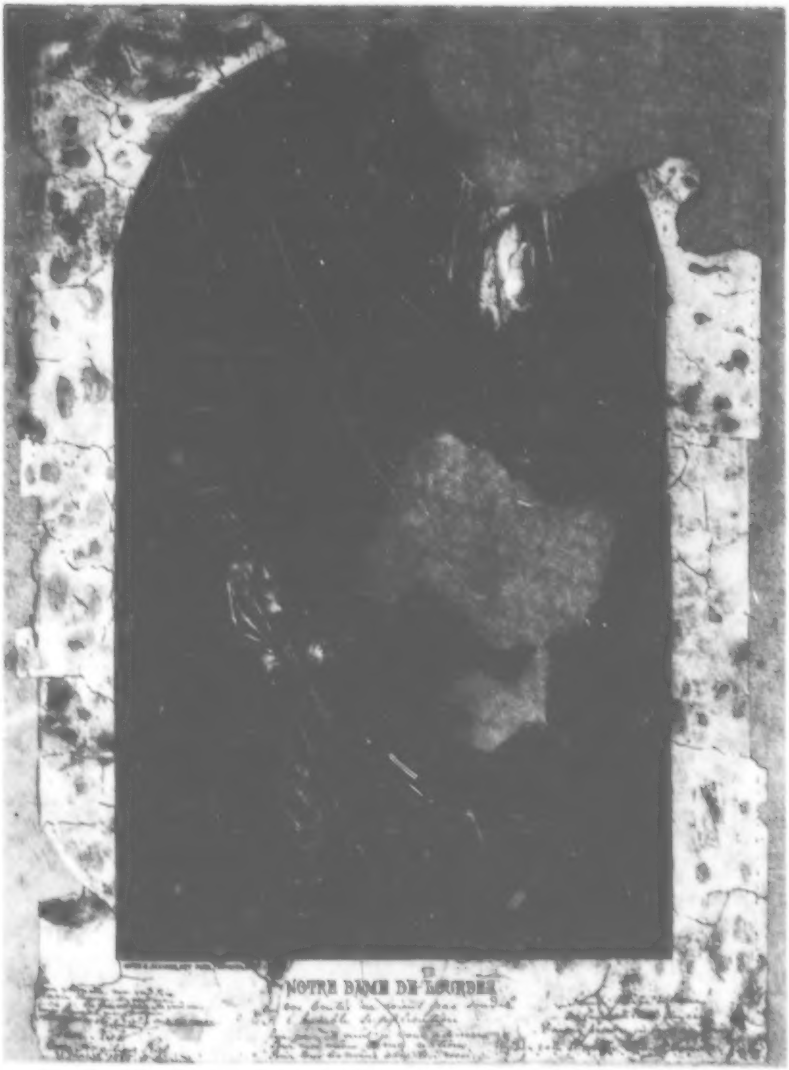


Fig. 24 Remains of a picture of Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes which was pinned on a white flag and flown in Batoche during the battle by Riel's Exovidat or his provisional council (literally "les élus du troupeau" or the chosen troup). Below is a prayer by Riel and the signature of his son Jean. *National Archives of Canada, C-15527.*

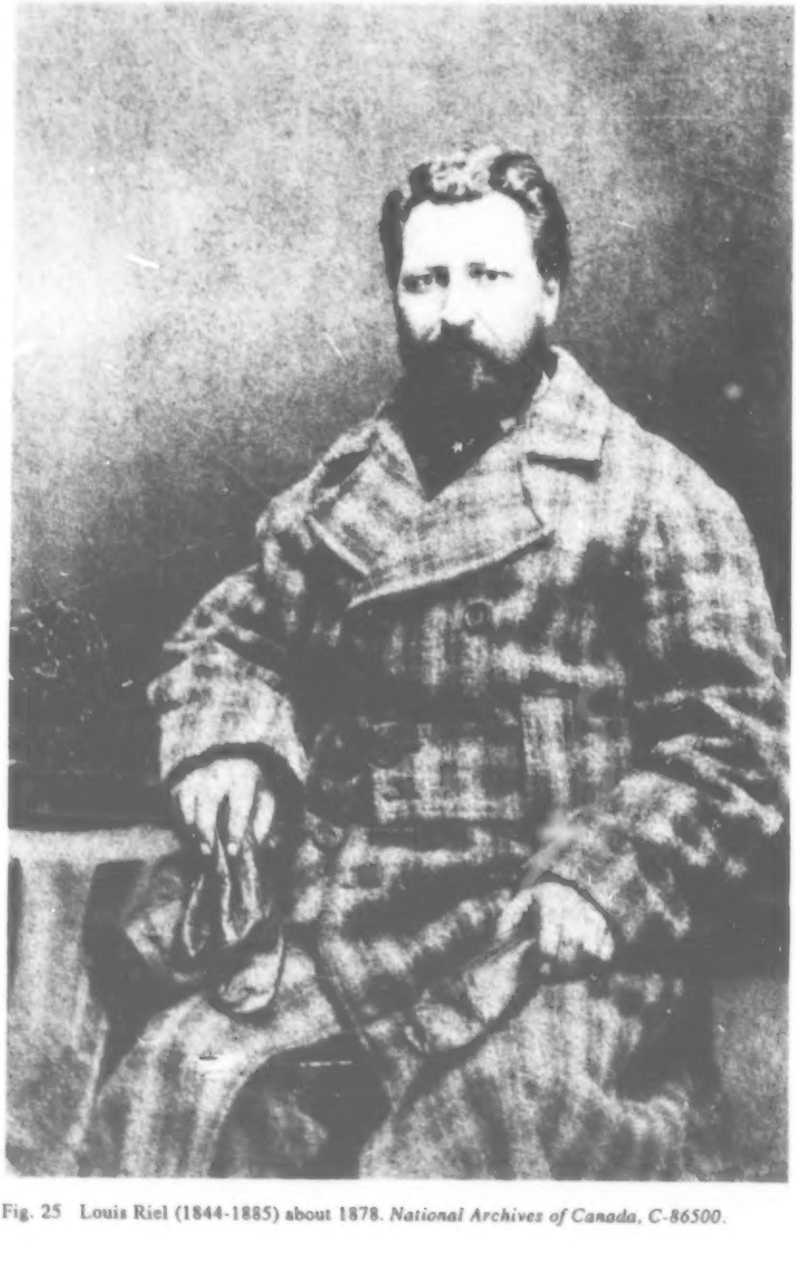


Fig. 25 Louis Riel (1844-1885) about 1878. *National Archives of Canada, C-86500.*

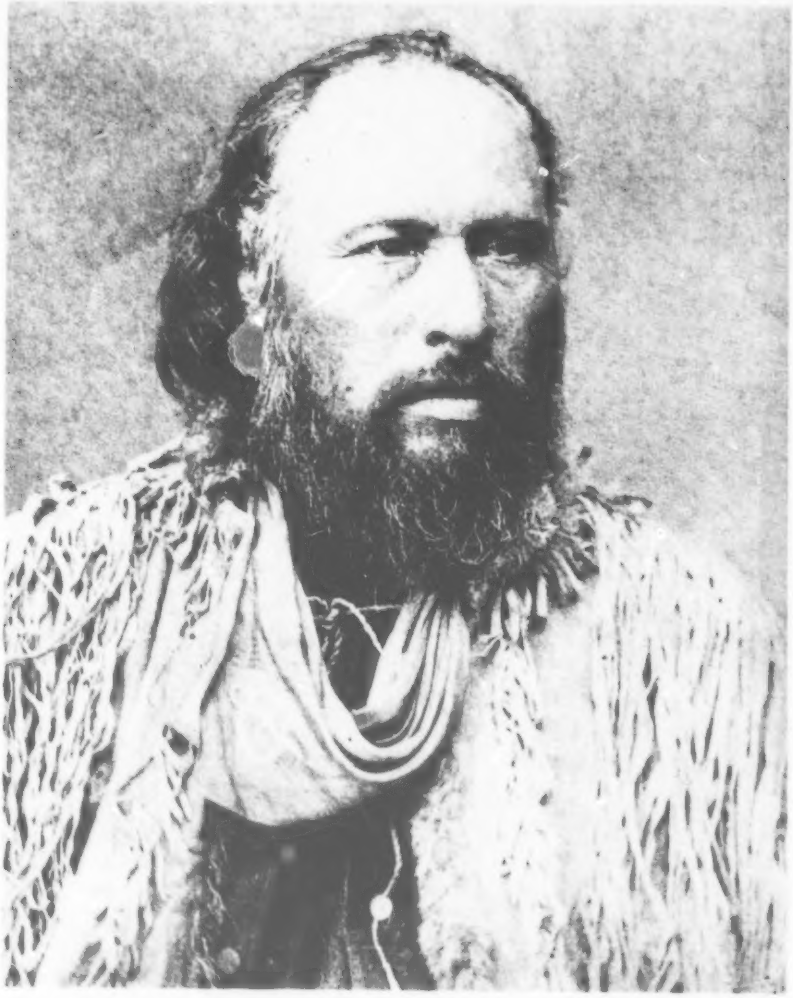


Fig. 26 Gabriel Dumont (ca. 1837-1906) in 1887. *Coll. Mallet, Union Saint-Jean Baptiste, Woonsocket, Rhode Island, USA.*

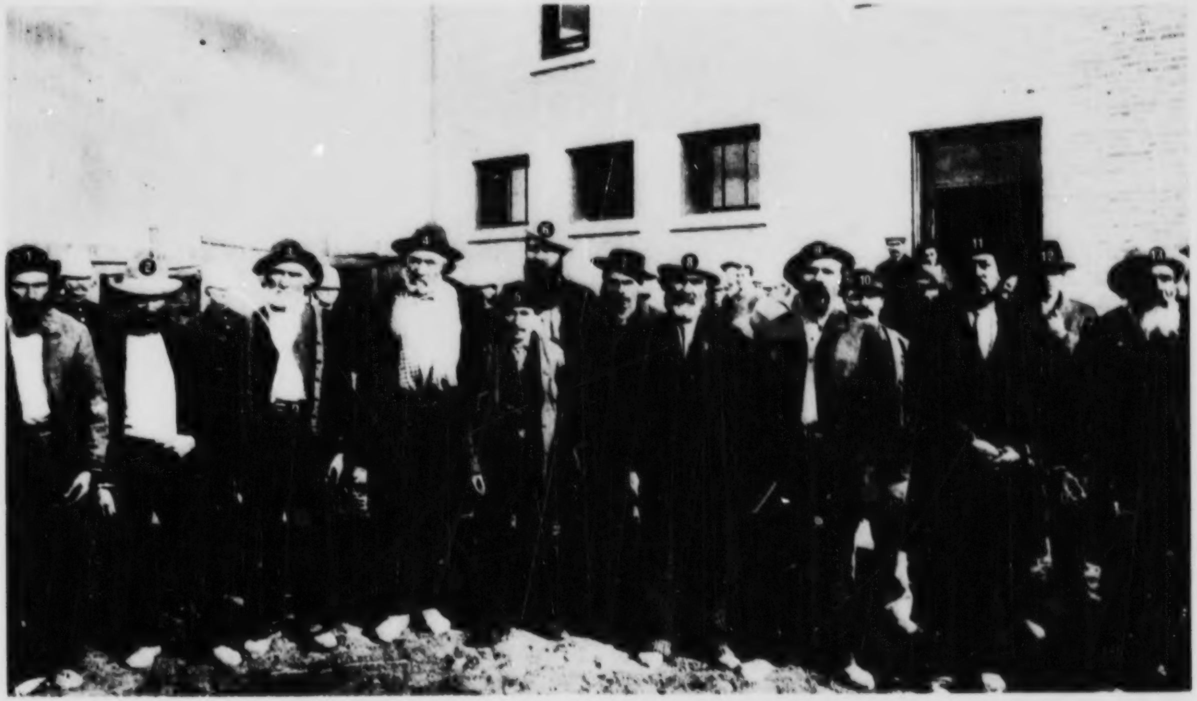


Fig. 27 Métis prisoners in Regina in 1885. 1) Ignace Poitras, 2) Johnny Sansregret, 3) Perriche Parenteau, 4) Pierre Gariépy, 5) Phillippe Garnot, 6) Albert Monkman, 7) Pierre Vandal, 8) Baptiste Vandal, 9) Toussaint Lussier, 10) Maxime Dubois, 11) James (Timous) Short, 12) a Tourond, 13) Emmanuel Champagne. *Saskatchewan Archives Board, Regina, R-B714.*

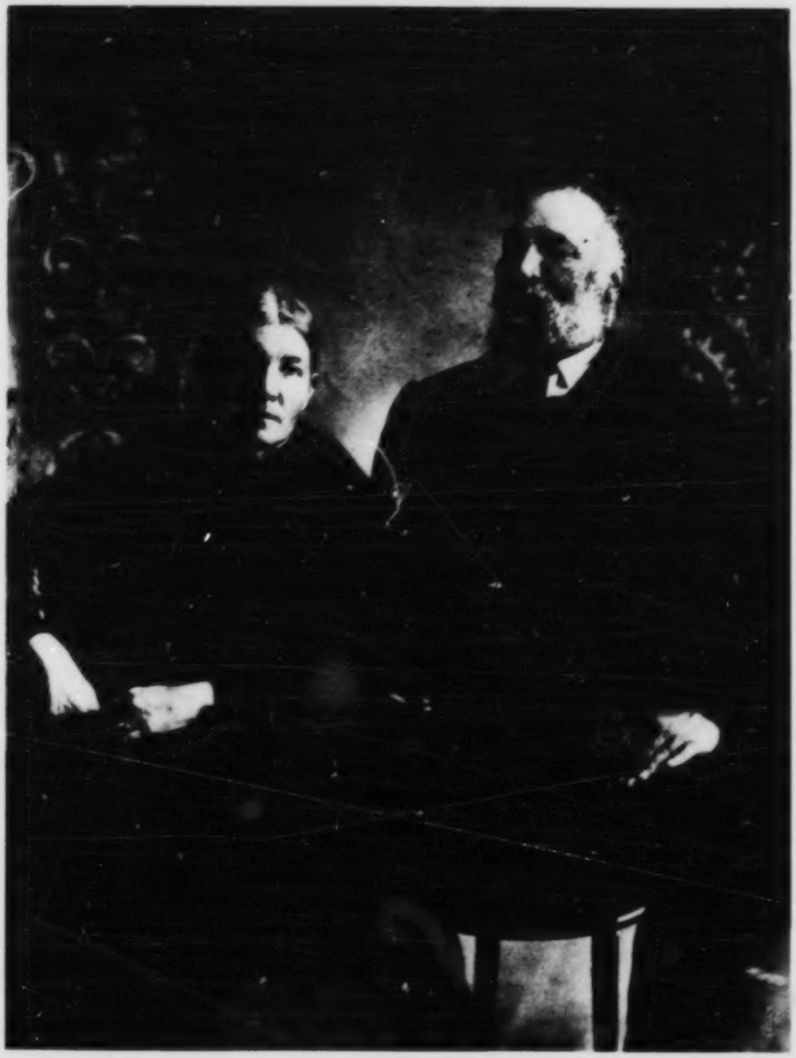


Fig. 28 Charles Nolin (1837-1907) and his wife Rosalie Lépine (ca. 1850-1927). After being long-time residents of St. Laurent, they moved to Battleford. *Provincial Archives of Alberta, OMI Collection, OB 3810.*

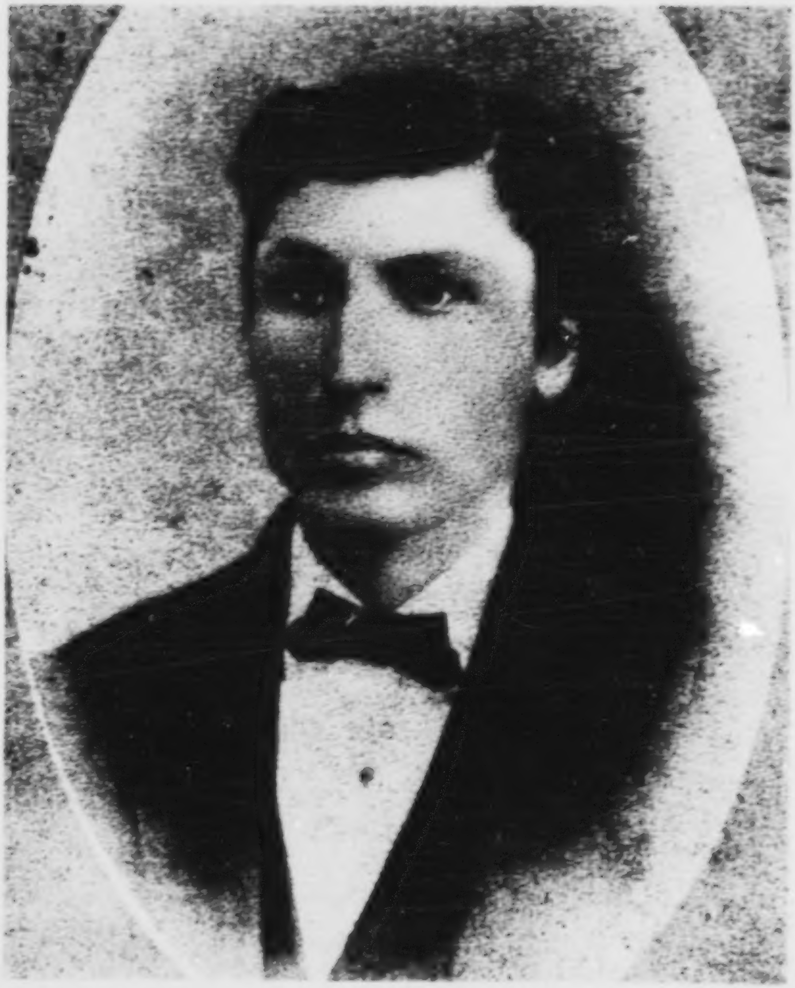


Fig. 29 Louis Schmidt (1844-1935), politician and land agent at Prince Albert. *Provincial Archives of Manitoba, coll. Louis Schmidt, N10414.*

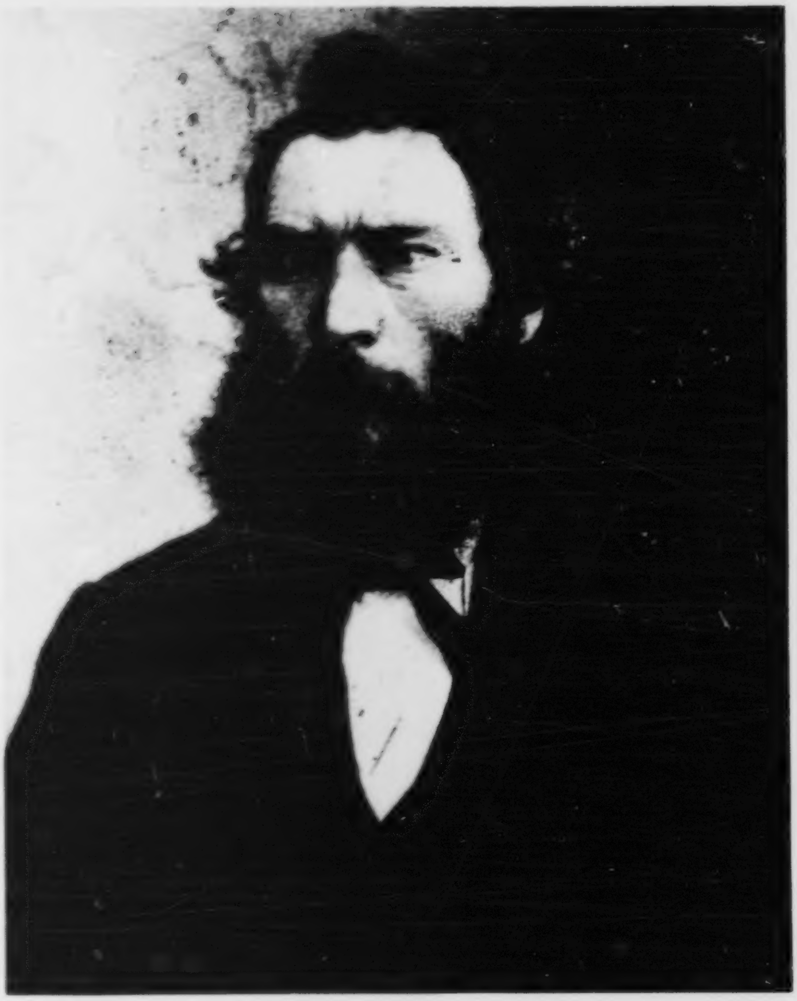


Fig. 30 Maxime Lépine (ca. 1837-1897), member of the Manitoba Legislature and part of Riel's Provisional Council in Saskatchewan. *Provincial Archives of Manitoba, coll. Maxime Lépine, N10909.*

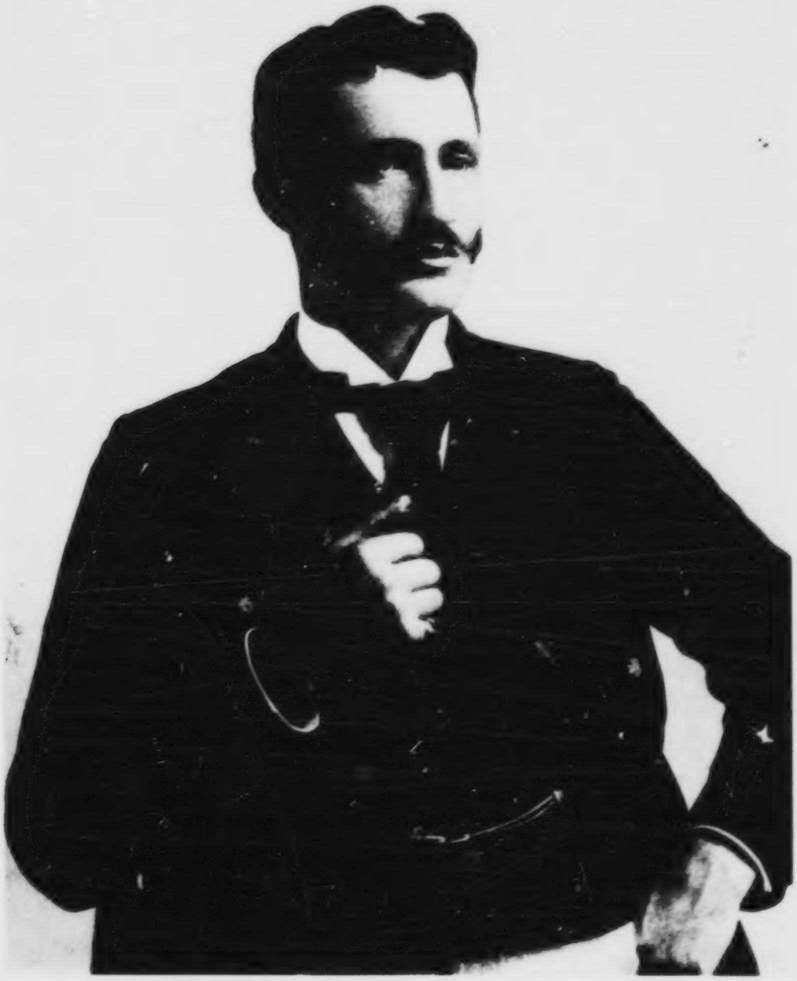


Fig. 31 Charles-Eugène Boucher (1864-1926) of Batoche, member of the Manitoba Legislature from 1891 to 1898. *Canadian Parks Service, Winnipeg, courtesy of Boniface and Agnes Fidler.*

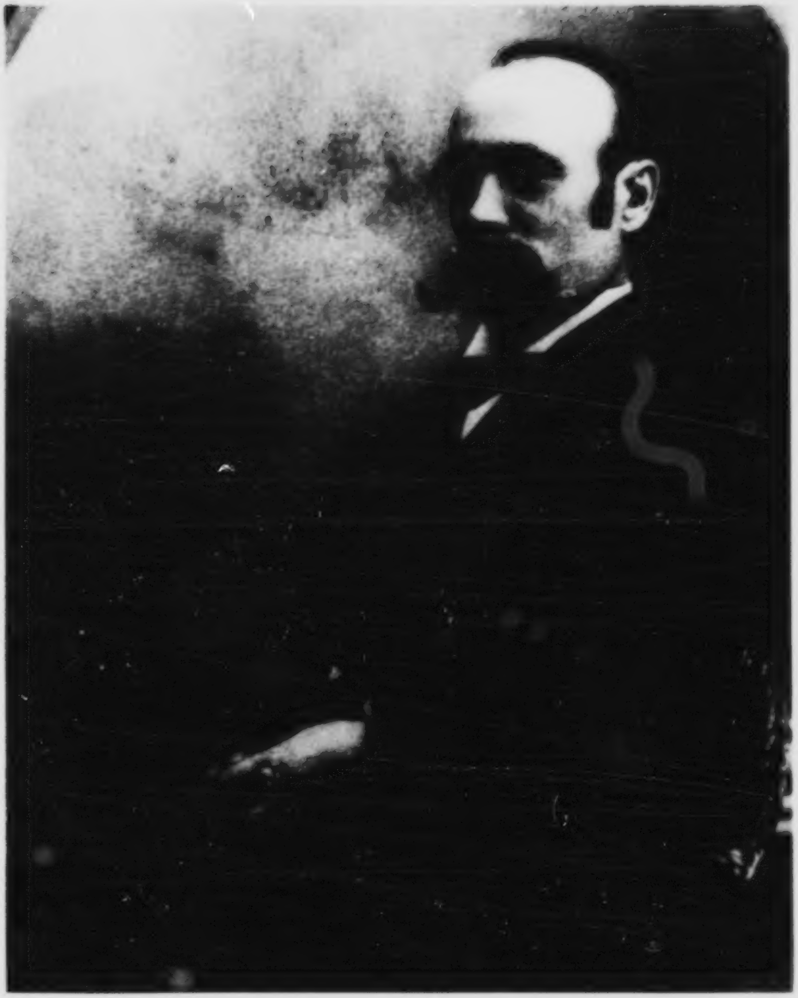
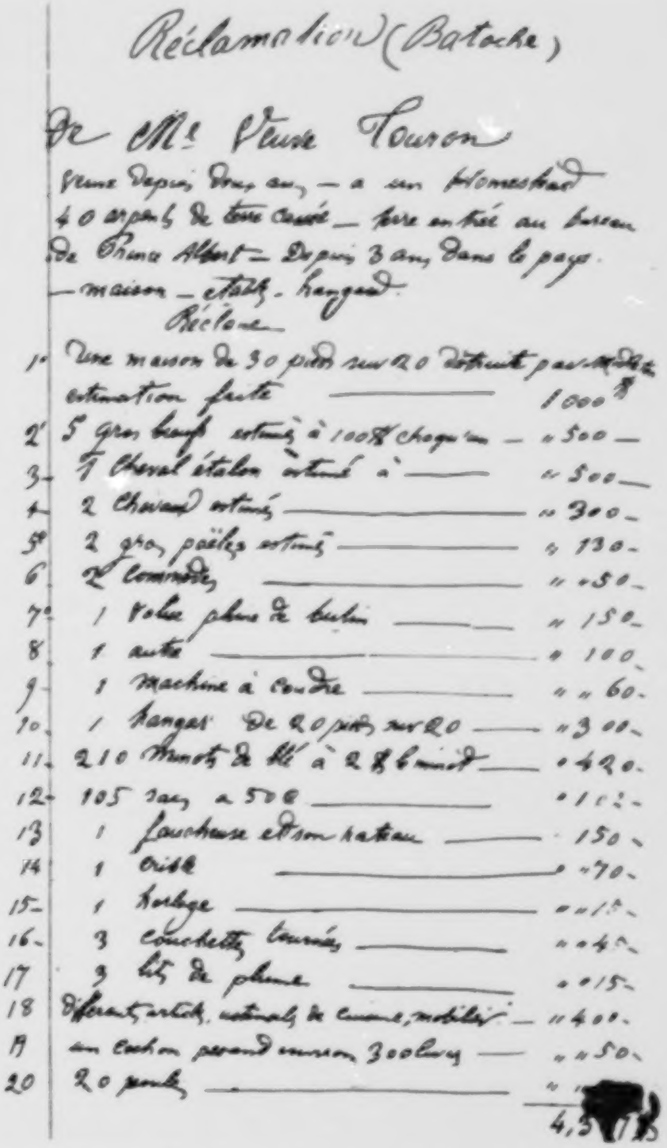


Fig. 32 Charles "le marquis" Fisher (1865-1907) of Batoche, member of the Manitoba Legislature from 1898 to 1905. *Canadian Parks Service, Winnipeg, courtesy of Mrs. Justine (Laviolette) Pambrun.*



Réclamation (Batoche)

De Mde Veuve Touron

Veuve depuis deux ans — a un Homestead
40 arpents de terre cassé — pris entrée au bureau
de Prince Albert — Depuis 3 ans dans le pays.
— maison — étable — hangard.

Réclame

1°	Une maison de 30 pieds sur 20 détruite par Middleton estimation faite	1000$
2°	5 gros boeufs estimés à 100$ chaque un	500
3	1 Cheval étalon estimé à	500
4	2 Chevaux estimés	300
5°	2 gros poêles estimés	130
6	2 commodes	50
7°	1 voiture pleine de butin	150
8	1 autre	100
9	1 machine à coudre	60
10	1 hangar de 20 pieds sur 20	300
11	210 minots de blé à 2$ le minot	420
12	105 sacs à 50¢	[illegible]
13	1 faucheuse et son râteau	150
14	1 crible	70
15	1 horloge	15
16	3 couchettes tournées	40
17	3 lits de plume	15
18	Différents articles, ustensiles de cuisine, mobilier	400
19	un cochon pesant environ 300 livres	50
20	20 poules	[illegible]
		4,5[illegible]

Fig. 33 Claim of Mrs. Josephte (Paul) Tourond for losses suffered during the North-West Rebellion in 1885. *National Archives of Canada, RG 15, Vol. 914, No. 21.*

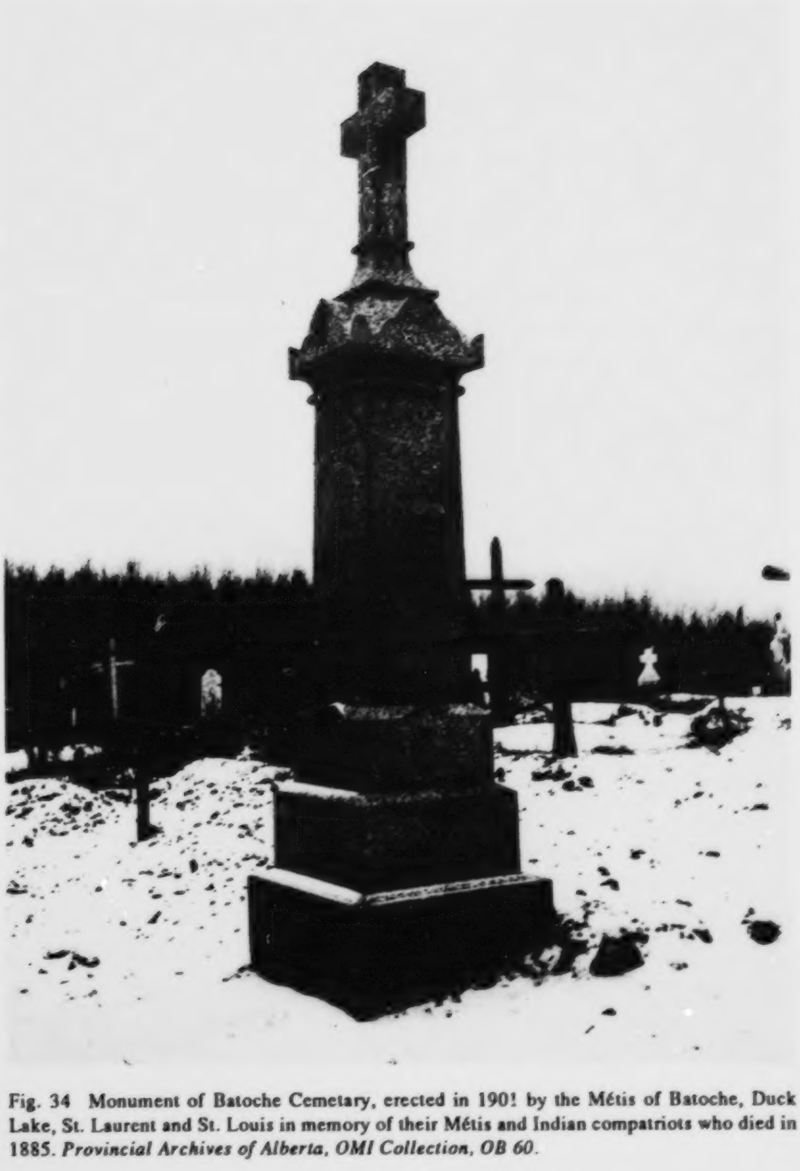


Fig. 34 Monument of Batoche Cemetary, erected in 1901 by the Métis of Batoche, Duck Lake, St. Laurent and St. Louis in memory of their Métis and Indian compatriots who died in 1885. *Provincial Archives of Alberta, OMI Collection, OB 60*.

IV THE ECONOMY

THE ECONOMIC TRADITION

Whether they worked as hunters, merchants, freighters (merchandise carriers), farmers or labourers, the Métis saw work differently from the Eurocanadian way. For them, work was generally related to an immediate need for food or personal resources. They gave little importance to accumulating goods; in fact, custom required that anyone who had a good hunt or good harvest shared it with his family and friends. This tradition of sharing and not profiting, described by Manuel and Posluns in *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality,*[1] was the general rule in the 19th century and even in the first part of the present one. However, there were exceptions, especially among the merchants who became integrated into the capitalist commercial system of the time. These people behaved more like Eurocanadians and adopted the practice of accumulating goods and investing funds. Their lifestyle went hand in hand with this: a fixed permanent home, a network of contacts and precise financial interests, and more time devoted to work.

Eurocanadians despised the slower rhythm of Métis life, in harmony with nature, and based on the principle of "living in the present." Missionaries, explorers and other agents of "progress" saw these people as lazy, improvident or unconcerned about the future, and "wasteful" or too fond of having a good time.

Before the immigration of the 1890s, Eurocanadians did not seriously threaten the traditional lifestyle and value system of the Métis. However, other economic realities constrained the "free people" and forced them into doing work that was less dependent on natural resources. The disappearance of the bison and the end of hunting trips around 1878 announced a time of crisis, which was at least partly responsible for the insurrection of 1885. The transition from hunting to farming had to be made too quickly. Lacking farming techniques and ploughing implements, as well training and inclination for this kind of work, the Métis were nonetheless forced to adopt it, especially if they wanted to remain in the area. Some of them headed for areas more favourable to cattle raising or worked as cowboys. This latter occupation was much to their liking and aptitude. But a fair number of them stayed in and around Batoche and tried to live off their land as best they could. Before 1925, the Métis, with a few exceptions, lived on mixed or "subsistence" farming combined with another job. They worked mostly as labourers and fished, gathered "roots" (seneca) or did some other seasonal jobs. They were "a class of poor people"[2] living marginally on the fringes of the economic activity of the Eurocanadian society that supplanted them.

THE FUR TRADE

The commercial activities of the Métis in the South Saskatchewan area go back to the 18th century. At the time, the territory was the centre of activity of the Gros Ventres (Haaninin) and Blackfoot (Siksika), but the Assiniboine and Cree also stayed there regularly. For the Cree on the prairies, the years 1740 to 1820 were a transitional period. Coming from the wooded areas north and west of Lake Superior, they were drawn more and more to the west and southwest by their rapidly expanding role as intermediaries in the fur trade. The Métis presence in the area also probably originated during that period. After 1734[3] and between 1750 and 1756, many French-Canadian voyageurs were hired for "the Western sea," and the French put up a series of posts on the Saskatchewan River: Fort St. Louis (Nipáwin), Fort à la Corne, Fort des Prairies and Fort la Jonquière.

The years 1770 to 1820 witnessed an increase in the fur trade in the area. More voyageurs went to work as winterers or "Nor'Westers" for the North West Company or other trading firms. Others became peddlers or independent merchants. During the 1780s, the North West and Hudson's Bay companies competed with each other in the area. Each one put up a trading post on the South Saskatchewan River. The "South Branch Houses" were situated near the future Gariépy (Gardepuis) crossing, about 15 miles downstream from Batoche.[4] This place was the scene of an intense struggle between the Gros Ventres, the main hunters and inhabitants of the district, and the new Amerindian arrivals, the Cree and the Assiniboine. The Gros Ventres were especially angry that the European traders should favour their enemies. In 1794, they attacked the North West Company post, which Nicolas Montour and Louis Châtelain were just able to save, and destroyed the Hudson's Bay Company post.[5]

Between 1805 and 1810, commercial activities resumed once more in the area. The Hudson's Bay Company put up Carlton House on the left bank of the South Saskatchewan near the future St. Laurent crossing, about seven miles downstream from Batoche.[6] Very close by, the North West Company built "South Branch House II," but soon abandoned this location for another, "La Montée," situated on a more favourable supply route on the North Saskatchewan. "Carlton House II" (Hudson's Bay Company) and "La Montée" (North West Company) became important supply centres for pemmican. In 1819-20, the posts reportedly accommodated about 70 French Canadians and Métis plus 70 women and children, each of whom produced 300 to 400 pounds of pemmican during the winter.[7]

One of the members of the Letendre family dit Batoche family (in all probability Jean-Baptiste Letendre, grandfather of the future founder of Batoche) was in the vicinity of Fort à la Corne during the 1810s.[8] Several sources attest the existence of "Batoche Post" on the North Saskatchewan, about three miles west of the junction of the two branches of the Saskatchewan River.[9] A Hudson's Bay Company employee came by this place in 1825 and noted the presence of French-Canadian or Métis hunters with their families.[10] Continuing his trip, he arrived in the vicinity of Fort Carlton, where he met a number of "free" Métis hunters who traded with the company.

> *Baptiste and Laventure Parisien joined us. They are freemen, halfbreeds. Their families are encamped in the Islands above and they left the Fort ten days ago ... the people at the Fort are well .... These halfbreeds though free have always been stationary at the Fort from where they hunt both large animals and occasionally furs and they always live well without encumbering the Company ... they often provide the Fort with fresh meat and I allow them to return to remain there during the winter.*[11]

During the following years and especially after 1849, when the Hudson's Bay Company tried in vain to tighten its monopoly by restricting the activities of free merchants, more Métis moved into Saskatchewan.[12] Some sold their furs to the company, while others sold them on the American market using as intermediaries such merchants as Narcisse Marion, Antoin[redacted]as and Norman Kittson at Red River and St. Paul.[13] In 1850, there were a great many Métis hunters and traders in the English River and Saskatchewan districts.

> *Troubled with a strong opposition in the neighbourhood ... Escapot [Isidore Dumont], Louis Batoch [sic] ... Joseph Dauphinais, Emmanuel Champagne, Hyacinthe Parisien ... Abraham Bélanger ... in the neighbourhood of Fort Pelly. Here (at Carlton) have traded a large quantity of provisions and traded 50 horses.*[14]

Around 1868, the winter camps on the South Saskatchewan began to take on a more permanent character. The Prairie Ronde camp, under the direction of Charles Trottier, and the one at the Gros Ventres Fork, better known as the Petite Ville camp and directed by Gabriel Dumont, received the largest number of visitors. The less important winter camps at Grosse Butte (Humboldt) and St. Paul, closer to Fort Carlton, also brought together several hunters and traders.

THE BISON HUNT

This activity has been described by several 19th-century witnesses. The first missionaries in Red River, including Fathers Belcourt and Laflèche, have left us detailed accounts of it.[15] Moreover, another contemporary, Alexander Ross, has dealt with other interesting aspects of these expeditions.[16] The bison hunt was subject to a hierarchical paramilitary structure and governed by precise regulations and controls. The hunters chose 10 captains with 10 soldiers each. One of the captains, usually known for his skill and prestige, became leader of the expedition. During the years 1840 to 1850, Jean-Baptiste Wilkie and Jean-Baptiste Falcon of St. François-Xavier successively held that position. The expedition consisted of men, women, children and a considerable amount of equipment. The caravan was subject to a series of regulations to prevent discord and make sure everyone got a fair share. There were two big hunts of about two months each: one in June and the other in September. According to a report by Father Laflèche in 1845:

> *In mid-June, almost all the Métis with their families and about 800 to 1000 wagons and 400 riders left as a group and headed for the Souris River, a branch of the Assiniboine, while others headed for the Missouri, though they did not usually reach the river. The riders did the hunting proper, and only the women or the savages who had been hired to dry and wrap the meat were left behind in the carts.*[17] [Translation]

Father Belcourt adds that the caravans from Cheval Blanc and St. Boniface usually met on the Pembina River.[18]

From the 1840s on, the caravans had to go further south and southwest: "In Red River, the bison hunt has diminished considerably over the last few years. The colonists have been obliged to go 80 to 100 leagues, and still it often happens that they do not find enough to load up their carts"[19] [translation]. Such natural factors as prairie fires, floods and snow storms reduced the number of bisons. But the systematic massacre of females, who were preferred for their meat, and of bulls, who were prized for their coats, prevented the herds from reproducing naturally. As a rule, there was also much waste.

> *The Red River colony alone destroyed 25 000 of them every year. It takes ten animals to make a load, or a thousand pounds of dried meat .... It is not rare for one family to eat one cow a week.*[20] [Translation]

Finally, much of the meat or the less tender portions of it were often left behind on the prairie.

Besides having to contend with these difficulties, the expeditions were also exposed to bad weather and accidents. During the chase, rifles often exploded, and hunters were often crushed by bisons. Father Belcourt describes one particularly tragic accident.

> *Three years ago, another young man wrapped himself inside a steaming hot skin he had just taken from the animal he had killed, when he realized that he would perish. The poor chap had not foreseen that, once the skin had frozen on him, he would be entombed within it, unable ever to get out of it.*[21] [Translation]

In the early 1860s, a strong demand for coats from the United States increased the frequency of winter hunts. This practice precipitated the gradual extinction already under way. An eyewitness account in 1871 shows how serious the situation was.

> *The hunters still have (almost) nothing, and the animals are rare and skinny ... one can no longer rely on the hunt. From Wood Mountain to the Little Rocky Mountains, we did not even see 3,000 bisons, and it would take at least 15,000 to load up the camp.*[22] [Translation]

During their first years in Saskatchewan, the hunt was still the main occupation of the Métis. But the caravans had to go further south and west to the United States, for there were few bisons in the Saskatchewan District. The Métis had good years (1873, 1877), interrupted by periods of scarcity and hard times. In 1873, a traveller in the district mentioned the prosperity of several Métis, particularly Gabriel Letendre: "... the previous year had been one of plenty, buffalo had once more appeared on the prairies of the Saskatchewan; wolf skins, robes and pemmican had fetched high prices, and [Mister] Batoche was rich and prosperous."[23]

Increasingly aware of the imminent disappearance of the bison, the Métis asked the government to introduce controls on the hunt.[24] However, when the North-West Territorial Council promulgated a law to that effect in 1877, the Métis stated that they had been put at a disadvantage with respect to the Amerindians, who were subject to no restriction and could also take full and exclusive advantage of the winter season when hunting was most profitable but generally prohibited.[25]

According to Gabriel Dumont, leader of the South Saskatchewan caravan, the bison disappeared from the area in 1878.[26] Father Fourmond in his chronicle states that several hunters were still chasing the meagre herds in 1881. This scarcity pushed up the price of pemmican. It rose from 14 to 25 cents a pound between 1878 and 1880.[27] But few hunters were able to meet the demand. In fact, those who persisted in this occupation had to go north in search of other pelts to eke out their income. According to 60 homestead declarations in Batoche, St. Laurent and Fish Creek in 1884 (45 of which reported occupations), no Métis claimed to be living only on the hunt. Most had two occupations: 23 (51.1%) were freighters and farmers, 10 (22.2%) were only farmers, and the other 12 (26.7%) combined various different trades with farming.[28]

Although they often had to spend part of the year up north (in the Cumberland, Le Pas and Lac la Rouge areas), several Métis were very successful trappers during the 1890s and 1900s. The skins of the badger, fox (red and silver), skunk, lynx, muskrat, beaver, wolverine, mink and marten fetched good prices on the Winnipeg, Montreal and London markets. These furs, usually sold by auction, enabled Batoche merchants to make considerable profits. At the Winnipeg auction in 1889, Salomon Venne's furs sold for $1700 and Georges Fisher's for $3131.[29] In 1891, Fisher obtained $4371 for 930 skins, including 300 marten, 102 bear and 200 muskrat skins.[30] Venne and Fisher made more profits on the London market than did Mitchell of Duck Lake.

FREIGHTING

From the 1840s on, the freighters between Red River and Fort Edmonton followed a route which crossed the Gros Ventres Fork (South Saskatchewan) in the vicinity of Fort Carlton (La Montée). The number of freighters increased during the 1850s and reached its peak around 1860. However, until 1891, freighting was at least a partial source of income for about a third of the population of Batoche, St. Laurent and St. Louis.[31] The freighters worked either for the Hudson's Bay Company or on contract to local merchants. The main merchants, Xavier Letendre, Salomon Venne, Georges Fisher, Jean-Baptiste Boyer and Emmanuel Champagne, hired men to take merchandise to their northern posts and bring back furs. The furs then had to be taken to the major trading centres, particularly Fort Garry, Winnipeg and sometimes St. Paul. This is how several young men in search of adventure, such as Ludger Gareau and Philippe Garnot, arrived in Batoche.[32] This post was at the centre of the main lines of communication: the Carlton trail from Winnipeg via Qu'Appelle to the northwest, and the Elbow trail from Cypress Hills and Wood Mountain to the south to Prince Albert and Montreal Lake to the north and on to the Cumberland district to the northeast. In addition, there were local trails linking Batoche with Battleford, Lac des Prairies (Meadow Lake), Lac Vert and Ile à la Crosse, where there were important trading posts. After 1882, when the Canadian Pacific Railway was built, most merchandise arrived by train in Troy, a station located about 15 miles south of Fort Qu'Appelle. Freighters from Batoche came with their oxen, horses and carts to load the goods and deliver them to their destination.

Many witnesses testify to the skill of the Métis freighters. According to Lawrence Clarke, chief factor at Fort Carlton, "as carriers for the northern districts ... a reliable source ... and as settlement increases in population, so will competition arise amongst them for fuller employment in this, their favourite occupation."[33] The Hudson's Bay Company saw the Métis as a source of cheap labour and as naive and therefore easy to exploit. Not only did the posts depend on them for their supplies, but all commercial activity in the area was dependent on them.

Among freighters with a *pied-à-terre* or residence in Batoche during the years 1870 to 1880, there was "Dodet" (Joseph) Parenteau, the Nault brothers, Daniel Gariépy, Norbert Delorme[34] and Abraham Montour. The latter[35] went regularly to Fort Pitt on his own account or on contract to Xavier Letendre, while André and Napoléon Nault[36] mainly worked for private individuals and went back and forth between Winnipeg and Fort Carlton until 1882, when they settled for good in Batoche. Maxime Lépine, a resident of St. Boniface until 1878, and Philippe Gariépy, a local resident since 1870, owned carts which regularly went to St. Albert and Ile à la Crosse.[37] Louis Goulet of St. Norbert, a freighter who has left his memoirs, recounts a trip to Batoche in 1883:

> *... arrived in Troy ... While I got rid of my trade returns (goods received in exchange), I decided to go and look for my brother Roger. He was with André Nault ... who like my brother had come from La Montée, better known by the name of Batoche, the trading post of a man named Letendre known as Batoche. They had both come to look for freight for the Batoche and Duck Lake (Lac Canard) traders ... I joined them ... at that time met Dolphus Nolin (son of Charles), Michel Dumas (called the Little Rat). I bought another wagon — loaded — and left for Lac Canard. My brother (Roger) lived four miles south of La Montée (Batoche) at Gabriel Dumont's Crossing. I stayed with my brother Roger while taking freight from Prince Albert to Troy and vice versa. In October 1883, I joined my brother to take freight from Prince Albert to Bataille River. I spent the winter with him.*[38] [Translation]

Among the other noted freighters of the time, there were Frédéric St. Germain,[39] who travelled regularly between Qu'Appelle, Carlton and Duck Lake, and Patrice Fleury,[40] whose family had been in the West since 1858 and who went mainly to Lac Vert. Abraham Bélanger and his sons, settled at the Tourond coulee (Fish Creek) since 1880, were important contractors. The father owned a store in Battleford and travelled regularly to Winnipeg and in Dakota and Montana, thus establishing a trade network between the Métis in those places and the Métis in Saskatchewan.[41] One of the rare freighters to maintain a profitable business at that time, he also freighted for the North-West Mounted Police between 1886 and 1900.

Freighting was an economic activity subject to several imponderables. The rigours of the winter, fluctuating demand and road accidents often forced a contractor or employee to work at several jobs. Employers often paid their workers in kind rather than in cash. The year 1884 for example was a bad one: the workforce was large, the demand was weak, and the South Saskatchewan Métis were forced to accept starvation wages. In 1885, the current price was only about three to four dollars per 100 pounds of merchandise.[42]

The years following the insurrection were hardly more profitable, except for a few periods of respite. As an observer reports in 1885,

> *... freighting is no longer enough to pull our poor people out of their misery, for many of them hardly earn enough to buy the flour they need for their families ... the Métis capable of freighting have tried to obtain freight ... but the merchants and the Company have lowered the freight rates, now that they can have their booty shipped cheaply by the Steamship Company.*[43] [Translation]

The records of the Hudson's Bay Company for the Carlton district during the 1890s indicate that the freighters of Batoche, St. Laurent and Duck Lake continued to ply their trade, but not anywhere, nor at any price. As H. Adams writes in Duck Lake,

> *I saw quite a number of halfbreeds yesterday and I feel certain there will be no difficulty in getting freighters to go to Qu'Appelle. I was all through Batoche and St-Laurent yesterday but could not get anybody to take freight for Montreal Lake ... I saw Philip Gardepuis [sic], William Boyer, Daniel Charette, Toussaint [Laplante] and others. Champagne said he would take some freight ... but have not yet heard from him.*[44]

He added that "the French seem to be afraid of bulldogs and bad roads ..."[45]

But the Gervais brothers, Norbert Bélanger, Isidore Dumont Jr., Daniel Hamelin and Edouard Laframboise carried an average of 6000 pounds of merchandise to Qu'Appelle during the summer of 1891.[46] Another contingent, including Toussaint Lussier, Gabriel Parenteau, Cyrille Lafond and Corbet Fayant, went to Lac Vert.[47]

Freighting to the north continued to be marginally profitable until the turn of the century, which encouraged several young men to migrate seasonally to Carrot River (Rivière Carotte), Fishing Lakes, Jackfish Lake (Lac Brochet) and other transportation centres. However, slowly but surely, mechanization displaced these freighters and forced them to work at poor paying jobs.

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY

In 1884, there were six merchants in the village of Batoche. Xavier Letendre's village had expanded rapidly since its foundation ten years earlier. The small store and modest home he had put up from 1873 on had been replaced by buildings that were "the most finished you could find in all of the North-West from Winnipeg on."[48] Letendre's neo-gothic house was valued at $6000 in 1885 [translation].[49] Xavier Letendre and his family lived comfortably. In Batoche, his turnover including furs, provisions and general merchandise, was estimated to be more than $25 000.[50] His commercial network extended to Fort à la Corne, Stony Creek, Frog Lake (Lac Grenouille) and Fishing Lakes. He hired freighters, some of whom were "family," including Moïse Parenteau, Châlins Thomas, William Letendre and Edouard Dumont.[51] From 1884 on, he had clerks in his Batoche, Frog Lake and Fort à la Corne stores, including his son-in-law Charles-Eugène Boucher, the future territorial representative.[52] Xavier Letendre also employed teams of salesmen. They visited the Amerindians and bought their furs in exchange for food and manufactured articles. Mr. Batoche was a born businessman but without any training. He managed one of the biggest businesses in the North-West and described his method as follows: "I never took stock of my goods, I always made my own business, this was the first clerk I had [Boucher], I have no education for such purposes ... and had to depend on my memory...."[53] He had to spend several months each year outside Batoche, either to visit his warehouses or to buy and sell in Winnipeg and sometimes even Montreal. His main suppliers were the Hudson's Bay Company, Carscadian and Peck, Thibaudeau Frères of Winnipeg, and Caswell of Qu'Appelle.

Letendre was ambitious and innovative. He had big plans for his village, whose virtues he praised in an account around 1882:

> *Let us come to our future city of Batoche ... my place became the population centre as well as an important business centre .... I will make places for reasonable [well-disposed] people .... From next year on, we hope to see five or six stores display their wealth to the eyes of the public ... a flour mill, sawmill and a forge are establishments for which we feel an urgent need.*[54] [Translation]

Around 1883, he put up a village blacksmith shop, and in 1884, he sold to Richard Tees of Prince Albert a lot along the row of stores (called "Batoche Avenue" by some either deferentially or derisively). Mr. Tees set himself up in Batoche as a farm implements dealer for David Maxwell, Manitoba Dealers and Implement Works.[55] It is therefore probable that Batoche had a steam-driven threshing machine before 1885, another indication of how advanced the settlement was, for few remote centres at the time had motorized farm implements.[56]

Letendre's flourishing business indirectly benefited the St-Antoine-de-Padoue mission as well as all the inhabitants of the village and its vicinity. He himself received many travellers and distinguished personalities. Serving in turn as justice of the peace and president of the school council, he favoured law and order and progressive education.[57]

Despite heavy losses in 1885, Letendre kept his business going. In fact, he even improved his situation in some ways. He repaired and embellished his house in Batoche and opened his planned new store. He remained the main merchant of the district and planned to open another retail store in Duck Lake in 1891.[58] He concentrated his efforts mainly on his northern posts which were his most profitable operations. Around the turn of the century, he rented his Batoche store to the Grant brothers of Duck Lake. After 1891, he made other plans. He moved southeast to the Minichinas Hills area to devote himself to an activity which he found both exciting and profitable: cattle raising.[59]

Imitating the seigneurs of New France, Xavier Letendre invited other merchants to join him. The first one to take him up on his offer was Jean-Baptiste Boyer in 1882. "I called Mr. Baptiste Boyer to my door ... a man of considerable means" [translation].[60] Although Boyer owned a farm in St. Laurent since 1874, he was above all a merchant. He had been travelling in the West for 20 years either on his own account or in association with his brother William and his brother-in-law Georges Fisher of Fort Qu'Appelle. His Batoche store stocked a variety of merchandise such as fabrics, blankets, clothes, toilet articles and canned and dried food.[61] His business was smaller than Letendre's, but his stock was assessed at about $9000 in 1885.[62] There was no competition with Letendre, nor with his other neighbour, his nephew Georges Fisher Jr. His retail sales were limited, and his merchandise served mainly as means of exchange for furs at the Lac Vert and Île à la Crosse posts.

The store opened by Georges Fisher Sr. in the summer of 1883 was run by his sons Georges and Joseph. The business was a branch of the Fort Qu'Appelle store, but stocked a variety of merchandise, furs, firearms, ammunition and provisions.[63] Fisher sold household articles retail, and like Letendre, had a liquor licence. His store was a social as well as a commercial centre. People came there to smoke a pipe and "have a little drink" while playing cards or billiards.[64] Among his suppliers were Stobart & Sons, the Hudson's Bay Company and Lyon Mackenzie & Powis. In 1885, the store had $7000 worth of merchandise and $18 000 worth of furs.[65] During the 1890s, Fisher took turns with Father Moulin and Salomon Venne serving as postmaster, and he also held the position of justice of the peace for the district. His situation enabled him to open another store in Duck Lake in 1892. He kept his business in Batoche until about 1905.

Emmanuel Champagne,[66] who had settled in Batoche since 1878, owned warehouses for merchandise and furs on lot 44, north of Letendre, Boyer and Fisher (see maps in ch. 5, "Land Claims ..."). He stored provisions and household articles for purposes of exchange with the Amerindians to the north. In 1885, he assessed his stock of furs at $10 000 and his merchandise at $4000.[67]

When Salomon Venne,[68] another merchant of note, opened his store on lot 55 southeast of the village in 1883, he had already spent over 30 years in the West as a successful fur trader. His store in Batoche was a relay point for his freighters, who came from Winnipeg and Qu'Appelle, and his employees, who brought back furs from the North. His was a family type firm. His sons Alexandre, William and David were in charge of his posts at Fort à la Corne, Lac Vert, Lac des Prairies, Lac Canot and Île à la Crosse. Venne's commercial activity was comparable to Letendre's both in the number of posts and in turnover.[69] In Batoche, Venne sold groceries, clothes and hardware. During the 1890s, the store also served drinks, and at certain intervals it took in the post office. It remained one of the main stores in the district until the departure of Napoléon, the founder's grandson, around 1925. Finally, Patrice Parenteau, nephew of Xavier Letendre, owned a store in the village between 1894 and 1904.[70]

At various times, a few strangers also opened stores in Batoche. In 1882, the F.G. Baker firm of Prince Albert set up shop on the left bank of the river, at the junction of the Carlton and Prince Albert trails. The Batoche branch was managed by a partner, H. Walters, together with a clerk. The business relied mainly on government contracts for supplying Amerindian reserves, including the One Arrow Reserve near Batoche. Walters & Baker hired local freighters to carry their merchandise. They also bought local furs and farm produce, thus providing an alternative to the Métis merchants. Their business in Batoche was based almost entirely on barter.[71] The store suffered heavy losses in 1885, and even though Walters & Baker were paid compensation, they decided to concentrate their activities in Prince Albert. The firm was dissolved shortly afterwards, in 1889.

The "little English" brothers George and John Kerr[72] were also present in Batoche in 1884 and 1885. The store the Métis nicknamed "Little Canada"[73] was next to Venne's. The Kerr brothers, born in Ottawa and merchants in Winnipeg and Saskatoon, had trouble being accepted by the community.[74] They exchanged their general merchandise for local products. "We bought everything in their home, such as potatoes, grains of all kinds, horses, cattle, furs, feathers, silk, wool, etc."[75] This was the only firm to provide such a vast outlet for local production. But like the Walters and Baker firm, it was forced to close shop in 1885. Shortly afterwards, in 1892, Pierre Guillemette, a merchant from Manitoba, took it over. Around 1900, the latter left Batoche in favour of Fish Creek.

Around 1898, George and William Grant of Duck Lake rented the Letendre store. In 1915, Joseph Branconnier bought the firm. He was the last owner of the store, which was destroyed by fire in 1923. Its disappearance marked the end of commercial activity in the village. The other stores had already been abandoned or moved to the east and southeast, along the road between Gabriel's Crossing and St. Laurent. Among the new merchants in that area after 1915, there were Gustave Parenteau and Raphaël Boyer.

The accounts of Hillyard Mitchell,[76] contractor and merchant of Duck Lake, indicate that the people of Batoche and St. Laurent made quite a few purchases during the 1890s and early 1900s. It seems that those clients were mostly freighters, labourers or other employees. But the merchants X. Letendre, P. Parenteau and G. Fisher also bought some of their supplies at Mitchell's.

To sum up, the Métis merchants enjoyed a viable if not flourishing economy until the turn of the century. To be sure, the great losses and destruction suffered in 1885 caused a major setback. However, several factors independent of the insurrection also influenced economic growth, such as isolation as regards transportation of local merchandise, a

Canadian tariff policy unfavourable to Western economic activity, and the discriminatory attitude of institutions (governments, companies, banks) towards this "rebellious" people.[77]

LIBERAL PROFESSIONS AND SKILLED OCCUPATIONS

The South Saskatchewan Métis community had its small group of government officials, physicians, insurance agents and schoolteachers as well as a notary. The North-West Mounted Police maintained a post in Batoche from 1888 on. There were usually three policemen, who contributed to the local economy and social life. Quite a few people in administrative positions came from the outside. Their stay in Batoche was often short. Under these circumstances, there was limited interaction with the community. But from the economic point of view, this group received regular salaries and injected at least a little money into an economy limited basically to barter. Among the government officials in the lands office, there were Louis Schmidt of St. Louis in the Prince Albert office, Jean-Baptiste Boucher Jr. in St. Louis, and Baron Huysmans de Neftal in Duck Lake.[78]

Among other government officials, there were the farming instructors on the One Arrow and Beardy reserves. They included Michel Dumas, Ferdinand Ladret, Louis Marion, Maxime Lépine Jr. and Pantaléon Schmidt, while Philippe Garnot was at Lac Maskeg during the 1890s. Several Métis worked for a while as schoolteachers, a profession which did not require any special training at the time. Octave Régnier, Philippe Garnot, Norbert Turcotte, Louis Riguidel and Jean (John) Letendre taught in local schools during the 1880s and 1890s. The positions of justice of the peace and postmaster required only basic schooling, that is, knowing how to read and write. Only a few people met these requirements which explains why these people had more than one position. George Ness, Louis Schmidt and Georges Fisher were justices of the peace at various times, while Father Moulin, Francis Tourond, Raphaël Boyer and Napoléon and David Venne were postmasters. David Venne was, in addition, a trained notary.

The physicians were not locals, but French immigrants. Little is known about Dr. Pascal, who was in Batoche in 1902, or about Dr. Gautier, who arrived in 1895, except that they were eccentrics who behaved in what Father Moulin called "irregular" ways. It is not even known whether they practiced their profession legally. The situation was more regular at Duck Lake, where Drs. Bourgeault and Touchette opened practices.

The policemen stayed for only very short periods in the barracks, except for Sergeant St. Denis and Inspector Bégin, who settled in the area, the former in Duck Lake and the latter in Prince Albert.[79] Their reports to their superiors suggest that the policemen were generally well-disposed towards the Métis and a little less so towards the Amerindians, who gave them more trouble. The Almighty-Voice incident[80] and others lead us to believe that there was complicity between the police and the Métis. On the other hand, the Mounted Police were a source of employment for the Métis. They hired carpenters and gave out contracts for supplying wood, hay, oats, barley and beef.[81] Several Métis worked at the barracks or as guides and interpreters (Philippe Gariépy and Gilbert Breland) but few, it seems, worked as policemen.[82] Access to contracts and government positions was limited. Favouritism, nepotism and patronage governed the choice of candidates, but in 1899, 1891 and 1898, the teams assisting the surveyors were nevertheless recruited locally.

Artisans or skilled workers had the advantage of being more independent than "hired men." This group included the carpenter and joiner Ludger Gareau and the carpenter Jean Caron Sr., as well as the ferrymen Alexandre P. Fisher and Jérôme Racette, who at least had to know their work well even if it was not highly skilled.

AGRICULTURE

The main purpose of the "St. Laurent Settlement," founded in 1871, was to promote farming and the adoption of a more sedentary lifestyle. As the former heads of families put it themselves,

> *[their children] must do like other white men, cultivate the ground or they must live and die like Indians .... The young people could not lead the same lives as their fathers. The country is opening out to the strangers and the Métis must show his white blood and not be crushed in the struggle for existence.*[83]

The Métis were aware of the new economic situation. They did not want to be left on the fringe like the Amerindians or put at a disadvantage with respect to the Eurocanadians. They were not destitute: "Founders are far from being poor men, they are rich in horses, and have all, more or less money at their disposal."[84]

The lands the Métis chose in Batoche and St. Laurent were specially adapted to mixed farming. There was plenty of water, wood and fertile soil — though swampy in some places, especially on the left bank — and a network of paths, as well as other essentials.

> *The trees, generally aspen, grow in clumps and could provide firewood and fence stakes as needed, and beyond those clumps are meadows suitable for ploughing, and lower-lying places yielding hay .... The idea of a waterway 300 yards wide on the average might arouse fear of flooding. But our Saskatchewan [river] is digging itself a bed, putting all the colonists out of danger.*[85] [Translation]

During the 1870s, farming was seen as way of life complementary to hunting, trading and freighting. As long as these three activities were profitable, even marginally so, it was possible to make a living. Otherwise, the Métis settlers found themselves in a precarious position. At the time, there was no established agricultural economy in the Canadian West. The only market for farm produce was an unpredictable local one. Farming amounted mainly to growing cereals and animal feed and cultivating a vegetable garden. Bad weather could easily reduce all that labour to nothing. In addition, there was the risk of infestation by insects, rodents or weeds. In general, the 1870s were not too bad, the drought of 1876 being an exception. On the other hand, the 1878 harvest was good.

Few Batoche Métis devoted themselves mainly to farming, but those who did persevered in their efforts. On the west bank, Abraham Montour cultivated 16 acres in 1876, and the Bélanger brothers 15 in 1879. On the east bank, no farm equalled Xavier Letendre's. Before 1880, his farm already covered 15 acres on lot 47 and 10 acres on lot 48. Corbet Fayant cultivated about 12 acres at the same time. In St. Laurent, Gilbert Breland, Jean-Baptiste and William Boyer were already serious farmers. Similarly, in the Fish Creek area, Gabriel Dumont, Charles Carrière and Isidore Villeneuve cultivated an average of 12 acres in 1881. Since most Métis who took up some land at the time earned their living mainly by doing other things, they were often absent from their farms (up to five months a year) and able to devote only a limited amount of time to ploughing and raising crops. Among these farmers were Elzéar Parisien, Baptiste Parenteau, Emmanuel Champagne, Corbet Gervais and George Ness, each of whom cultivated about five acres.[86]

The St-Laurent-de-Grandin mission served as a model to the Métis who settled on some land. Father Fourmond and a few hired hands cultivated the mission lands; they had several animals and a big garden which fed almost the entire staff. Others imitated it, especially some of the older people. The chronicle of 1879 records that Isidore Dumont harvested 190 bushels of wheat and that "thanks to the hard work and care of his wife, his garden ... is more beautiful every year and the richest one in the colony," [translation] and Father André also cites the example of Joseph Ouellette, "another patriarchal figure ... already four of his children have become the first [the most prosperous farmers] of the colony, and one of them has the most beautiful herd of animals in the parish" [translation].[87]

If most Métis had small properties, they used much of their land as pasture for horses, horned animals, milk cows, pigs and even sheep. The 1870s were the transitional years between two lifestyles, one of them essentially migratory and the other increasingly sedentary. Father André sums up the economic activity of those years as follows:

> *"While travelling on the prairie ... or to Red River to sell their pelts and make their purchases, the true colonists gradually increase their ploughed fields ... Moïse Ouellette ... has ploughed an immense area and sown some thirty bushels of barley on it, without counting other kinds of grain."*[88]
> [Translation]

The 1880s were promising from the point of agricultural progress. According to 60 homestead applications in 1884, 58 percent of the Métis were already engaged in activities related to farming prior to that date. This number increased to 64 percent in 1884. The Stobart and Eden Company near Duck Lake put up a flour mill which saved the Métis a long trip to Prince Albert. In addressing the governments,[89] the Métis had already asked several times for ploughing implements and seed grain similar to what had been granted to the Amerindians. They never succeeded in convincing the authorities that they needed help and training to become integrated into the farm economy. In general, the 1880s were more difficult than expected. The climate conditions went from extreme drought to hailstorms and early frosts. The harvest was fairly good in 1881 and still better in 1882. But 1884 was particularly difficult, and there was general misery. Father Fourmond nevertheless managed to harvest 300 barrels of potatoes, 50 barrels or bushels of turnips, two bushels of carrots and 50 cauliflowers.[90]

In 1884, there was a big increase in the number of Batoche farmers. About 20 families arrived from Manitoba in 1882-83. All the lands on the east bank of the South Saskatchewan were now claimed. According to the owners' declarations, the cultivated portion averaged only about 10 acres.[91] This was little for a 160- to 195-acre lot, but enough for domestic consumption. On the other hand, growing cereals was not very profitable. The Kerr brothers of Batoche offered producers the following prices in 1885: wheat, $1.75 per bushel, barley, $1.25 and potatoes $1.[92] Almost all farmers also raised cattle. A herd of 20 to 30 head was not uncommon, and some, like Xavier Letendre, Emmanuel Champagne, Salomon Venne and Georges Fisher, had more than 50 animals.[93] Some had purebred horses worth $250 each. In 1884, Télesphore Demers, a prosperous cattle-breeder from Montana, established a ranch on his brother-in-law Philippe Garnot's land. He kept more than 100 horses on it, including two Percherons, and set up a local cattle-breeding business.[94]

Few of the occupied lands on the west bank were cultivated. The soil was not suitable for farming, being generally sandy and rocky, especially near the river. The difficulties the Métis had were not exceptional compared to the problems the Eurocanadians encountered. According to the chronicle of 1884: "Many are not well enough equipped with draught animals and especially farming implements, and they have no experience at all" [translation].[95] Families relied heavily on garden produce, especially potatoes, onions and carrots, to supplement a diet consisting essentially of meat and bread. Some also planted rhubarb, and some even tried to cultivate sugar maples though with little success. Gathering wild fruit was a seasonal ritual, and the preparation of several of their dishes depended on it. The Faithful Companions of Jesus in St. Laurent and Prince Albert report that wild fruit helped to save the Métis, following the bad harvest of 1884:

> *A lot of fruit was found at Eagle Creek. Métis to the number of a hundred went together in a band to gather the fruit (strawberries, raspberries, cranberries, stone fruit, currants and gooseberries). They found four miles of country absolutely black with the wild pear [saskatoon berries] .... Some gathered as much as sixty bushels each and each bushel would sell as much as $3.*[96]

The years following the armed resistance were particularly difficult from an agricultural viewpoint. The fields were not seeded in the spring of 1885 so there was no harvest. In July 1886 a hailstorm destroyed the few fields under cultivation. There was a moment of respite in 1887 after the first real harvest in four years. The following yields were reported in the Saskatchewan district:

Wheat: 25 bushels an acre on 831 acres;
Barley: 30 bushels an acre on 1559 acres;
Oats: 35 bushels an acre on 1602 acres.[97]

But the drought reappeared in 1888 and 1889. From 1886 on, the government came to the aid of the neediest by supplying them with seed grain. Though apparently beneficial, the program carried several restrictions. After the harvest, the farmer had to return twice the amount of seed he had received, and his farm was mortgaged. Several Métis either hesitated or declined to take advantage of the program: they were especially afraid of the consequences of the right of retention. The Métis of Batoche raised this objection in their petitions of 1886 and 1888.[98] They demanded that the mortgage clause be removed. The government did not accept this request, but assured the Métis that they had nothing to fear, that they would be treated with the greatest indulgence and the greatest compassion if, as a result of a bad harvest, they should be unable to meet their payments.[99] The other requests — for hay lands and for draught animals and ploughing implements (to be financed by a system of loans) — were also rejected on the ground that the Métis were supposed to be independent and could not expect a privileged status. However, in retrospect such aid would probably have prevented many departures for several farmers in difficulty became discouraged and abandoned their lands. Take for the case of Cléophas Champagne and Daniel Gariépy who left their lands without having obtained title because they were unable to meet their financial obligations. Among the members of the second generation who took some land at the turn of the century, Louis Letendre Jr. and Pierre Caron found themselves forced to abandon theirs.[100] Others managed eventually to pay off their debts. Jean Caron Sr., who borrowed seed grain on several occasions between 1886 and 1896, paid his debt and obtained title to his property in 1903. Another settler, Jean-Baptiste Gervais, was grappling with similar difficulties, but died before he was able to meet his obligations, and it was not until 1930 that his son Moïse managed to free the family property of debts. All things considered, few Métis accepted seed grain or took advantage of the help offered on several occasions during the 1880s and 1890s. In the words of Superintendent Bowen Perry: "They have not asked for seed grain and very few have availed themselves of the offer of work made by me."[101]

In spite of these constraints, most Métis were engaged in farming during those years. Out of 135 homestead applications between 1885 and about 1925, 108 or 80 percent declared that they were working in occupations related to farming. Of this number, 85 or 63 percent identified themselves specifically as farmers. But the markets for farm produce were still limited and largely regional. For example, most grain (or flour) was shipped north in exchange for furs. Prices remained low. In 1890, the price of hay was only $5 a load.[102] On the other hand, the Métis were gradually settling down to farming, though not without some bitterness. According to an eyewitness in Batoche in 1893 and 1894:

> *... called at some settlers and found them in moderately good circumstances but a quantity of grain was still standing in the fields ... cattle and horses in good health ... most of the settlers are busy hauling grain to the grist mill at Duck Lake .... If the Half-breeds would think more of farming and less of sport they would be better off. The white settlers seem to prosper fairly well but the majority of Half-breeds are always behind.*[103]

There were three apparent movements within the local farm population. First, several young Métis took some land, thanks to scrips granted to children born between 1870 and 1885.[104] On the other hand, new families claimed lands that had been abandoned in 1885. Some came to join the "Métis Family," while others were French or Belgian immigrants, who began arriving in 1888. Finally, several sons inherited lands from their fathers. In the immediate vicinity of Batoche village (lots 1 to 71 on the east bank and 1 to 24 on the west bank of township 43-1-3), about 15 properties were claimed between 1895 and 1913. Of the 14 new properties on the west bank, 11 were taken by Métis.[105] Louis Letendre's sons Baptiste, Joseph, Eugène and Louis Jr. each claimed some land between 1904 and 1910. Their farms were well-suited for raising cattle. In 1910, Baptiste Letendre had a herd of 12 head, plus five horses and 10 pigs. He also cultivated 30 acres of his property, which was better than average for the area.[106] His brothers did more or less the same thing. Some of their neighbours, including Joseph and Jean Pilon, had a lot of trouble because their lands were swampy and unsuitable for cultivation. On the east bank, where the lands were generally more fertile and more suitable for cultivation, the new arrivals were more successful in their efforts. But even there, the number of acres under cultivation rarely exceeded 25. The emphasis was on cattle, the average being 25 to 30 head.[107] Another noteworthy fact was that few farmers mortgaged their lands.

The situation was similar in St. Louis. Jean-Baptiste Boucher and his sons Baptiste and Salomon took a second homestead. At the turn of the century, the acreage under cultivation in St. Louis averaged 25, but some, like the Boucher family, Maxime Lépine Jr. and Charles Ferguson, cultivated between 30 and 50 acres.[108] Several people had about 15 animals. In St. Laurent, conditions were generally less favourable so farming was less important. Nonetheless, some lands were good, and people persisted in their efforts. Between 1895 and 1910, Moïse Ouellette had an average of 50 acres under cultivation, whereas the average for the area was only 15. In 1891, Daniel Charette declared that he had 20 acres under cultivation since 1885, that 60 acres were fenced in, and that he had a herd of a dozen horses and some pigs.[109] Even though the lands were more fertile in the vicinity of Fish Creek, that area was the first to be ceded to new arrivals by Métis wanting to regroup or pursue other occupations.

The years 1886 to 1900 were a transitional periods from the point of view of population movement. Families wanting to remain in the area tended to regroup, while others left en masse. From an agricultural view, this phenomenon tended to consolidate manpower and ensure the success of the more serious farmers. The Fidler and Carrière families, who had settled south of Gabriel's Crossing in the direction of Fish Creek during the 1880s, went to live near their relatives in Vandal (between Gabriel's Crossing and Batoche). In 1886, Isidore Dumas of St. Louis took a second homestead, lot 69, in Batoche. His brother-in-law Joseph Ladéroute, who was still in Manitoba, joined him in 1901 and claimed lot 56. Louis Letendre, husband of Angéline Dumas, had been living nearby, on lot 59, since 1886. Finally, in 1896, Mrs. Josephte Tourond[110] of Tourond coulee (Fish Creek) also went to live in Batoche on lot 58. Her daughter and her son-in-law Raphaël Boyer joined her on the neighbouring farm. Around 1915, they opened a general store on their farm. The Touronds were cattle-breeders rather than tillers of the soil. Mrs. Tourond had a herd of 40 head in 1896, and her neighbours had almost as many.[111] Their farms did not, properly speaking, constitute ranches, but rather realistic adaptations of them to local geographic and economic conditions. On the other hand, some families in the area decided to go into cattle breeding on a larger scale.

In 1890, Salomon Venne and his sons Napoléon, David and Bruno set up a ranch near the present village of Wakaw, about 12 miles southeast of

Batoche. The family kept its main residence and store in Batoche, but diversified its farming and business activities. Another major operation from 1892 on was Xavier Letendre's ranch near Alvena: Letendre had more than 200 head of cattle and some 30 horses.[112] His son-in-law Charles-Eugène Boucher, who lived near Gabriel's Crossing until about 1910, also kept a big herd. He took several trips to the United States to obtain purebred animals. Others headed for the mountains of southeastern Alberta, thinking that they would find better conditions in that area. Ludger Gareau, Norbert Delorme and Corbet Gervais thus left Batoche in 1886 and 1887. Several Métis who had been exiled following the insurrection also came back with their animals. Having managed in 1887 to get themselves exempted from customs duties levied on importing animals,[113] Calixte Lafontaine and Edouard Dumont took advantage of that opportunity. Quite a few cattle-breeders either wintered far away with their herds or looked for other pastures in the vicinity. Jean Caron Sr. and his sons chose the latter course and took other lands in Fish Creek.

In 1889-90, people in Batoche and vicinity were agitating in favour of establishing a so-called industrial school. This demand was contained in Alex Fisher's and Letendre's petitions of 1888. Father Fourmond had started the project when he tried to establish a colonization company back in 1886. To his mind, the Métis needed guidance to be successful farmers. The school, subsidized by the government, would have at its disposal modern farming implements, enabling the Métis to familiarize themselves with new techniques. It is difficult to judge the merits of the project. In retrospect, it seems that, perhaps apart from a few exceptions, industrial schools did not contribute to the technical advancement of the Métis or Amerindians.[114] A study of this question shows, on the one hand, that the Métis were interested in receiving farming instruction and, on the other, that the government constantly refused to consider this demand, which was similar to the rights it had granted to the Amerindians.[115] The situation could be summed by as: "The Indians had tools because the government had given them some. The Whites had enough money, or more than enough, to buy some, but the Métis had nothing" [translation]![116]

The Métis farmers of the South Saskatchewan had some successes as well as failures in their undertakings. A quantitative analysis of the homestead files illustrates the nature of their agricultural activities from 1884 until about 1925 (see Appendix A). Although the results had been modest, the Métis had cultivated their lands before 1885. According to 58 declarations in 1884, 28 individuals had cleared one to 12 acres, nine had cleared 13 to 21, while four had cleared more than 21 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number of acres under cultivation from date of settlement to date of declaration, according to the Métis homestead files in 1884 (Appendix A: codes 1, 2)

	Farmers	
Acres	**Number**	**Percent**
0	17	29.3
1-3	7	12.1
4-6	7	12.1
7-9	7	12.1
10-12	7	12.1
13-15	3	5.1
16-18	2	3.4
19-21	4	6.9
over 21	4	6.9
TOTAL	58	100.0

Missing data: 2 cases

On the other hand, after 1885, the gap between Métis and Eurocanadian farmers was not as wide as has been supposed. According to six categories of declarations, 101 out of 131 (77%) of the Métis and 19 out 28 (67.6%) of the Eurocanadians took from zero to three years to clear their lands. On the other hand, none of the 28 Eurocanadians took more than nine years, whereas seven Métis took from seven to 27 years.

The Métis cultivated a little less land than their French-Canadian, French and Ukrainian neighbours. But if 17 (28.8%) of the Métis did not cultivate their lands in 1884, after that date, 88 (56.8%) cultivated between 16 and 30 acres, and 26 (16.8%) between 31 and 60 acres. There are also more divergences between the Métis themselves than between Eurocanadians (see Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2. Number of acres under cultivation at time of declaration, for all Métis applications in 1884 (Appendix A: codes 1, 2)

	Farmers	
Acres	Number	Percent
0	17	28.8
1-15	32	54.2
16-30	9	15.3
31-35	1	1.7
over 35	0	0
TOTAL	59	100.0

Missing data: 1 case.
Note: The only declaration by a non-Métis in 1884 is for a farm of 1-15 acres.

Table 3. Number of acres under cultivation (until about 1925) by ethnic group, for all registrations after 1884 (Appendix A: codes 3, 4, 5, 6)

	Farmers			
Acres	Métis	Non-Métis	Number	Percent
0	2	1	3	1.6
1-15	38	3	41	21.7
16-30	88	18	106	56.1
31-45	22	11	33	17.5
46-60	4	1	5	2.6
over 60	1	0	1	0.5
TOTAL	155	34	189	
Percent	82.0	18.0		100.0

Missing data: 3 cases.

Until about 1915, the number of acres under cultivation at the time of application for title to the property was from 16 to 30 acres for the two groups, Métis and non-Métis. But after 1900, the non-Métis gradually gained over the Métis (see Table 4). These figures support the hypothesis that, during their first few years as farmers, the Métis worked relatively hard and were relatively successful.

Table 4. Acres under cultivation at the time of applying for title (Appendix A: codes 4 and 5)

Acres	Before 1885 to 1897	1898 to 1915	1916 to 1933	Farmers Number	Farmers Percent
(a) Métis					
0	0	0	1	1	0.7
1-15	20	14	3	37	27.4
16-30	17	45	11	73	54.1
31-45	1	14	5	20	14.8
46-60	0	1	2	3	2.2
over 60	0	1	0	1	0.9
TOTAL	38	75	22	135	100.0

Missing data: 1 case.

Acres	Before 1885 to 1897	1898 to 1915	1916 to 1933	Farmers Number	Farmers Percent
(b) Non-Métis					
0	1	0	0	1	3.2
1-15	0	1	1	2	6.5
16-30	2	11	3	16	51.6
31-45	0	8	3	11	35.5
46-60	0	1	0	1	3.2
over 60	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	3	21	7	31	100.0

Missing data: 1 case.

The Métis also took more time to cultivate their lands or to meet official requirements (30 acres during the three years between registration and application for "letters patent"): 42.4 percent of the Métis took more than seven years and some even over 25 years. On the other hand, 50 percent of the non-Métis obtained their titles after six years (see Table 5).

Table 5. Number of years of cultivation between date of registration (after 1884) and date of obtaining title (Appendix A: codes 4 and 5)

	Farmers	
Years	**Number**	**Percent**
(a) Métis		
0	1	1.0
1-3	32	29.6
4-6	29	27.0
7-9	17	15.7
10-12	6	5.5
13-15	5	4.6
16-18	3	2.8
19-21	5	4.6
22-24	2	1.8
over 25	8	7.4
TOTAL	108	100.0

Missing data: 28 cases.

(b) Non-Métis		
0	1	3.3
1-3	8	26.7
4-6	15	50.0
7-9	6	20.0
over 10	0	0
TOTAL	30	100.0

Missing data: 2 cases

The Saskatchewan Métis were more breeders than farmers. Between 1885 and 1925 or so, they had an average of five to 10 head of cattle and one to five horses. However, the number of animals reported probably does not reflect the real situation, for most of them lost their cattle in 1885. At the time, some went temporarily to other areas or were forced to sell their herds. It was not until the 1890s that cattle-raising was again in full swing as an agricultural activity in the area (see Table 6).

Table 6. Head of cattle and horses declared by the Métis after 1884 (Appendix A: codes 3, 4, 5)

(a)	Cattle	Respondents	Percent
	0	21	16.3
	1-5	30	23.3
	6-10	34	26.4
	11-15	19	14.7
	16-20	13	10.1
	21-25	4	3.1
	26-30	2	1.6
	31-35	1	0.8
	46-50	1	0.8
	51-55	2	1.6
	over 55	2	1.6
TOTAL		129	100.0

Missing data: 12 cases.

(b)	Horses	Respondents	Percent
	0	11	8.5
	1-5	–	–
	6-10	95	73.1
	11-15	5	3.8
	16-20	2	1.5
	21-25	2	1.5
	26-30	1	0.8
	31-35	1	0.8
	over 35		
TOTAL		130	100.0

Missing data: 11 cases.

The inherent difficulties in farming before the First World War — particularly the lack of frost-resistant seed grain, the presence of such diseases as blight, and ignorance of such farming techniques as crop rotation, fertilization and mulching — meant the Métis managed to survive but not to prosper. Quite a few of them were therefore forced to do other jobs to supplement their income.

The method of cultivation used in the Batoche area was the traditional one. The fields were ploughed in narrow strips separated from one another by deep furrows. Each field was usually bordered on one side by a deep ditch and enclosed by a fence made of wooden stakes. In 1910, the farm equipment used by the Métis was still essentially non-mechanical, centring on oxen, plough and scythe. Threshing machines and harvesters were rare. The Métis cut their wood either in the vicinity or where they went "camping" with the whole family or several families.

During the 1880s and 1890s, farming was closely connected with the fur trade. In the absence of world markets, grain was often taken to the northern posts by freighters and traders. It was also used as a means of exchange for manufactured goods. On the whole, any agricultural activity was limited in scope and relatively unprofitable. Added to these rather discouraging prospects, there was the lack of appeal of this kind of work. A resident of Duck Lake at the turn of the century assessed the situation as follows:

> *Not much value was attached to land in terms of farming value, by both Métis and whites. Twenty-five acres was a big farm. There was wheat, oats and a little barley. But all we could do with it, was to take it to the mill and grind what we needed. The rest we fed to the chickens. The Métis, they preferred other things, a few fish, a few furs. But they were successful with ponies. Farming: too big a gamble.*[117]

OTHER MALE OCCUPATIONS AND WOMEN'S WORK

Several jobs enabled the Métis to eke out an income from farming or at least to earn their living. Some jobs, like carting field stones to a building site or delivering firewood, were seasonal and not very profitable. The annual deer, duck and prairie chicken hunts brought in some income but more importantly provided food for the family at little cost. Besides fishing, the Métis also collected roots that brought in about 20 to 25 cents a pound in 1894.[118] Ice fishing and regular fishing were not very profitable. Although according to one report, "the little Champagne boys at the crossing" [translation] (John and Patrice) sold fish, especially sturgeon.

Around 1890, the railway became the biggest source of employment. The construction of the northern line of the Canadian Pacific, the so-called Qu'Appelle, Longlac and Prince Albert one (between Regina and Prince Albert), caused quite a stir in the community. People pushed for recognition of Batoche's central location. They advertised for a meeting to be held in Batoche to demand that the railway pass through their locality.[119] Old rivalries between Duck Lake and Batoche came out into the open. But since Batoche was on the east bank of the South Saskatchewan and about 11 miles east of the planned route, the authorities preferred to build on the still unoccupied fertile lands between the two branches of the Saskatchewan River more to the west. Just like in 1881, when the Canadian Pacific Railway had planned to build a transcontinental route across the "parkland" near Batoche, the village lost out again in 1890. Despite this, the building of the "fire car" (*chars de feu*) track created an economic boom. The Métis were hired by the contractors Ross, Keith and Madigan & Robinson. They worked mainly at cutting and transporting ties.

> *Luke Madigan, tie contractor is getting out ties .... He is letting out small contracts at the rate of $7.50 per hundred ... 75 teams and 125 men will be put on. It is said wages will be $26 and board per month for good men .... It is expected that a force of 1500 men and teams will be employed to push the completion [of the railroad] to Prince Albert as soon as possible.*[120]

Between 1889 and 1893, several Métis from Batoche gathered bison bones between Qu'Appelle and Saskatoon. They put 800 to 1200 pounds of bones in an ox-cart that brought in $3 a load.[121] This activity lasted only a few years, but it paid well because of the strong demand from fertilizer and chemical manufacturers in Chicago and St. Louis.[122] The coming of the railway to Saskatoon led to it creating a major bone depository. During the Boer War, the Canadian government hired Métis to make pemmican for the troops.

One of the biggest merchants and contractors in the area, Hillyard Mitchell, had several Métis employees. He hired clerks, freighters, cowboys and labourers for his store and ranch. He generally paid with merchandise from his store instead of money. The conditions of employment were spelled out precisely, and Mitchell was a generous but demanding employer. It also seems that he distrusted Métis workers and regarded them as prone to laziness and wild behaviour. Ambroise Fisher worked for him for a long time: in 1885, he started as a clerk and interpreter at $25 a month,[123] and he kept this position until about 1910. In 1892, Dodet Parenteau tamed horses on Mitchell's ranch at the rate of $3 a head.

Patrice Fayant mowed and gathered hay there at $1.25 a day in 1893 and $1.25 a ton at the turn of the century. Patrice Fleury also regularly worked for Mitchell. Between 1892 and 1902, he signed contracts for delivering wood in the form of "pickets" and "poles." In 1902, he was paid $5 a hundred for cutting and transporting 2000 pickets.

To take another example, Jérôme Ledoux was hired as a labourer on a one-year contract including board, at $182 a year. He was paid each week (in merchandise from the store) and received a bag of flour, two pounds of tea and 30 pounds of bacon a month.[124] Métis who worked with their own teams of horses received $2.50 a day. It sometimes happened that Mitchell came to the aid of destitute Métis families, either by hiring the father for a short term, or by paying a fine for someone, who then had to reimburse him by working for him. During his mandate as a representative, Mitchell was also able to provide construction jobs on roads, bridges and crossings. In 1889, Father Fourmond of St. Laurent asked him to help two Métis.[125]

Betweem 1899 and 1901 the Klondike Gold Rush attracted several young men from the area. Among them were Jean-Baptiste Boucher Jr., Maxime Lépine Jr. and William Fidler. Most came back home after a few years, but some were suspected of having taken advantage of it to escape the despair of their families.

Women's work varied very little during this period. Following the disappearance of the bison, women's economic role underwent a major change. Formerly indispensable for transforming that resource (cutting up the meat, treating the skins), they were henceforth relegated to domestic work: preparing food, cleaning house, making clothes and raising children. In the case of farm women, gardening, milking cows, and feeding the chickens were usually added to their responsibilities. Domestic tasks also included making soap, washing, baking and sewing. These tasks, though indispensable, were not much appreciated. Unfortunately, lacking education, women were generally unable to find jobs outside the home except those in fields. People did not like their daughters "to do housework for others."[126] According to several sources, domestic wages (including room and board) were only $4 to $10 a month at the turn of the century.[127] Teaching was the only profession open to women at the time, and even it was subject to restrictions. Apart from rare exceptions, only unmarried women, widows and nuns could teach. Mrs. Josephte Tourond (née Gervais) taught at Fish Creek between the death of her husband Calixte Tourond in 1885 and her remarriage to Boniface Lefort in 1887. Miss Onésime Dorval, a lay person, made a career of teaching as well as caring for two "adoptive daughters": Mary, whom she had taken in back

East, and a young Métis girl from Battleford, Georgine d'Amours. Mary married a Mr. St. Louis, a Prince Albert contractor, and Georgine married Auguste Lenglet, a Batoche merchant and subsequently Duck Lake postmaster. In view of Lenglet's advanced age, his wife Georgine soon took over the direction of the post office from him. Several women had careers in the arts, like the actress Agnès Marion and the musicians Elmire Venne and Elise Tourond.

On the other hand, several women were particularly influential or showed a certain independence in exercising their traditional roles as wives and mothers.

Marguerite Caron (née Dumas), who survived her husband by several years, took a second homestead and farmed it with her sons. Josephte Tourond (née Paul) lost her husband shortly after her arrival at the so-called Tourond coulee in 1883. Two of her sons were killed during the insurrection of 1885, another died of tuberculosis the same year and three others before 1900. Her farm and buildings were in ruins after the Battle of Fish Creek. Despite her heavy losses, Mrs. Tourond rebuilt her farm in Fish Creek and took a second homestead in Batoche. Her cattle-breeding operation was comparable to that of other local cattle breeders. For his part, when Emmanuel Champagne obtained title to one of his properties, he transferred it to his wife, who farmed it herself with her elder daughters.

The midwife's role was exclusively a female responsibility. "Bringing a child into the world was a woman's business" [translation].[128] There were no regular midwives, but different women played this role from time to time in return for other services. The usual choice was a woman of over 40 who had had several children. "Herbal medicine" was almost exclusively a female field, but propriety only allowed visits to women and children.

THE CONTEXT AND ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE UPRISING OF 1885

The uprising happened in the midst of an economic and social crisis: low farm output due to disastrous climate conditions, a shrinking volume of freight and an expansionist Canadian economic policy showing little regard for Métis lifestyle and values. All these factors prompted them to react.[129]

The Métis were convinced that the actions of the government and its institutions were of malicious intent. It was a conviction based on their dispossession in Manitoba and the kind of disdain or indifference that they had encountered in the Territories since 1870. In 1883, the Métis population along the South Saskatchewan lived comparatively well. "Before 1885 we were not rich, but we all enjoyed modest comfort" [translation].[130] Middleton's soldiers were impressed by how prosperous the settlement was.

> *They have a fine settlement, comfortable houses, with plenty of horses and cattle; as compared with other settlements they are well off. The land on which the rebels are located is one of the most fertile and beautiful localities in the North West of Manitoba [sic] ... at Batoche we found some of the nicest houses in the country.*[131]

The Battle of Batoche caused much destruction. Even if reprisals were inevitable after a war, in this case, they were particularly harsh and widespread. In addition, much of the pillage and destruction had been committed after the capitulation. In their testimony, Canadian soldiers do not hide their deeds. "Empty houses were ransacked ... we captured over forty head of cattle and each man has something he intends to keep as a relic: knives, saddles, violins, beadwork ..."[132] Another soldier was less lucky: "I had all I owned stolen or lost at Prince Albert, including all of the loot I got at Batouche [sic] which I would not have lost for a good deal ..."[133]

Even the clock was stolen from the church.[134] Few homes were spared — only the church, the presbytery and the village buildings because rumour had it that the clergy and merchants had been loyal. A friend of Georges Fisher, who was there after the conflict to assess the losses, reports:

> *... on my way home from Batoche yesterday, I found all the houses for about three and half miles down burnt ... the places looked very desolate .... Many of them must have been very comfortable indeed ... the sight it represents now is pitiful ... the people are scattered.*[135]

The defeat of May 1885 was followed by general misery. Several witnesses speak of utter destitution. Xavier Letendre's children took refuge in the hills northeast of Batoche, where they lived on dog meat.[136]

Most people had only what they were wearing at the time of the general retreat following the final assault on the village. Emmanuel Champagne stated: "When I was captured, I did not even have a coat, and my wife and children had only what they were wearing" [translation].[137] Some died of illness due to exposure, and "consumption" and the "flu" assumed devastating proportions between 1886 and 1920. The government tried to come to the aid of the population in distress: several men went to cut and deliver firewood or do other manual labour for the North-West Mounted Police and were given provisions in return. The government also distributed food through the missionaries of the district. In the very beginning, quite a few Métis took advantage of these offers, but stubborn pride and fear ot the government induced the population to refuse this aid. The police report that the only ones to accept public charity were the destitute and those families whose fathers were in prison or in exile.

No fields were seeded in the spring of 1885 nor in 1886 so there was no harvest for two years. Several men were therefore forced to go into temporary "exile" or find seasonal jobs outside the area. It took many years, a generation, for the community to recover.

IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION

The 1890s marked the beginning of French immigration into the region and arrival of larger numbers of Quebeckers in the vicinity of Bellevue. The Métis perceived their new compatriots as being both moral support and a challenge. They were afraid of the favouritism generally shown to Eurocanadians by the government and church. In general, immigration tended to push back the Métis who, because they felt threatened and vulnerable, tried to consolidate their position by settling elsewhere. In 1893, Father Moulin reported "that some of them want to leave the place"[138] [translation]. Around the turn of the century, there was a general exodus from Fish Creek. Several families also left Batoche and St. Laurent. However, quite a few of these departures were temporary. For some of them it was the end of a long period of moving back and forth between various centres.

Most of the families who left the area after the defeat of 1885 took refuge in the United States, particularly in North Dakota and Montana. After some time, many exiled families seem to have returned to Canada.[139] Some went back and forth between Lewistown, Selby Junction (Hill) and Kalispell in Montana and the area around Medicine Hat, Lethbridge and Pincher Creek in Alberta. In the 1890s, the Montana residents included Ambroise Dumont and his son in Malthy, Pierre Ouellette, his wife Marguerite Gingras and their family in Lewistown, Alexandre Venne in Sweet Grass and Urbain "Pezzan" Delorme Jr. in Kalispell. In 1900, François Champagne, son of Ambroise, was in Havre, while Eugène Boucher, the former representative of Batoche, stayed in the Musselshell (Coquille) River area from 1898-1908. Afterwards he returned to St. Louis. In 1898, Patrice Fleury Jr. was near Helena, while Abraham Montour and Isidore "Wabash" Parenteau were in Hill. Patrice Fleury returned to St-Louis-de-Grandin around 1905, while Montour and Parenteau settled in the vicinity of Medicine Hat. Other families went to live instead in the vicinity of Belcourt, Dunseith and "St. Joe" in North Dakota. They included Jean Desmarais and his family between 1885 and 1887, as well as Napoléon Nault and Michel Dumas around 1885 to 1888. Afterwards Desmarais and Nault headed for Medicine Hat, while Dumas settled in Ebb and Flow on Lake Manitoba. Finally, in 1900, Napoléon Nault and his family were in St. Malo and his brother André Jr. in St. Vital, both in Manitoba. A former resident of Fish Creek, Roger Vandal, rejoined his relatives in St-Jean-Baptiste.

The families who left Batoche and vicinity were motivated by economic and social considerations. There was a great demand for cowboys and horse trainers on southern Alberta ranches. The Métis were particularly attracted to this work and excelled at it. Those who went there included Xavier Pagé (and afterwards his wife Mrs. Elizabeth Ward [née Dumont] and their children), Athanase Falcon, Joseph Dumas, Dodet Parenteau, Frédéric St-Germain and Théophile Caron. The last three eventually returned to Batoche. Cuthbert Gervais, Ludger Gareau, Norbert Delorme and Jean-Baptiste Fidler settled down for good at Pincher Creek, where they set up ranches.

A larger number of families headed north. The North was especially attractive to freighters, fur traders, fishermen, trappers and interpreters. The Battleford area (including Jackfish Lake [or Lac Brochet] and Lac Outarde) received the largest number. From the 1890s on, we find the following families from Batoche and vicinity in that area:[140] Elie Nault (M.A. Charette), Baptiste Boyer Jr. (V. Nolin), Abraham Bélanger (M.A. Versailles), André and Norbert Sansregret, Norbert (I. Monet) and William (M.R. Sansregret) Sauvé, William Letendre (M. Fayant), Jules Marion (V. Boucher), François Fidler (J. Laplante), Dodet Parenteau (J. Houle), Isidore Dumont Jr. (M. Cayen), Athanase Lépine (M. Bélanger), George Ness (E. Delorme) and, at certain times, William and Napoléon Venne.

Baptiste Boyer Jr. first settled further north at Onion Lake (Lac Oignon) and William Venne at Meadow Lake and Green Lake. Another group settled in the Aldina (Lac Maskeg), Leask and Marcelin lakes area. We also find the following families in this area: Philippe Garnot (F. Arcand), Modeste, Magloire and Joseph Ledoux, Alexandre Venne, Jonas Moreau (C. Desjarlais), Gilbert Breland (E. Boyer) and Chrysostome Boyer (A. Ouellette). Finally, many families headed for the Carotte River northeast of Batoche. This area included Lac Croche (Kinistino and Bonne Madone), Birch Hills and Crystal Springs. At the turn of the century, we find Frédéric Rocheleau (F. Dubois) and Azarie Pilon (V. Letendre) in Crystal Springs, Alexandre and Maxime Dubois in Kinistino and Albert Marion (S. Boucher) and John (Jean-Baptiste) Letendre (son of Xavier) in Bonne Madone. Another group consisting mainly of the family of Modeste McGillis (I. Poitras) headed for Willow Bunch.

These families regularly visited their relatives on the South Saskatchewan River. Some came back to die. Families scattered to the north and southwest were often reunited through business (freighting) trips. Those who remained in Batoche tried resolutely, though frequently in vain, to make a comfortable living. A visitor in 1905 found a small community of about 450 people that had kept up its traditional way of life and would continue to do so for several more years:

> *In Batoche ... there was little or no change at this charming spot, the halfbreeds who form the majority of settlers ... [do] gardening, hunting, fishing and occasional freighting.*[141]

Notes

The Economy

1 George Manuel and Michael Posluns, *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality* (Don Mills: Collier-Macmillan, 1974), pp. 19, 53.

2 Conversations with Sister Irène Schmidt, Prince Albert, September 1978 and Mr. Martin Dumont, Duck Lake, 1983.

3 E.Z. Massicotte, "Congés de traite conservés aux Archives de la province de Québec, 1739-1752," *Rapport de l'archiviste de la province de Québec* [hereafter cited as *RAPQ*], 1922-23, pp. 192-265; ibid., "Répertoire des Engagements pour l'ouest conservés dans les Archives judiciaires de Montréal (1670-1804)," *RAPQ*, 1930-31, pp. 353-453 and 1931-32, pp. 243-365.

4 SABS, A.S. Morton, "Historical Geography of Saskatchewan to 1870," Vol. 4, unpublished manuscript. According to Morton's investigations around 1925, the South Branch House of the Hudson's Bay Company was located on the northeast quarter of section 35 and lot 13, township 44-1-3, and the North West Company House on the southeast quarter of section 11, township 45-1-3.

5 W.K. Lamb, ed., *Sixteen Years in the Indian Country: The Journal of Daniel Harmon, 1800-1816* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1957, reprint), pp. 96-97. Several employees were killed. The survivors fled to Fort St. Louis and Fort à la Corne.

6 According to A.S. Morton (op. cit., Vol. 4), Carlton House and South Branch House II were located on the eastern half of section 9, township 44-1-3.

7 G.C. Davidson, *History of the North West Company* (New York: Russell, 1967, reprint), p. 239.

8 *DBC*, Vol. 6: "1821-1835," s.v. Jean-Baptiste Letendre *dit* Batoche.

9 Elliot Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater North West: The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David*

Thompson, 1799-1814 (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1965, reprint), Vol. 2, p. 484, note 48; A.S. Morton, op. cit., Vol. 10, p. 484c.

10 PAM, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, E. 243, 1825-26, "Summary of a journey from York Factory to the Saskatchewan and continued at Carlton, 1825-26," p. 7, 24 August 1825.

11 Ibid., 26 August 1825, p. 7. Of the Métis at the fort, he mentioned the names of Lavallée, Léveillé, Sayer, Guilbeau, Plante, Primeau, Parisien and Larocque.

12 Jules Le Chevallier, "Saint-Laurent et Saint-André de la Prairie-Ronde," *Le Patriote de l'Ouest* (Prince Albert), 14 July 1937. According to the account, some caravans at the Gros-Ventres (South Saskatchewan) Fork stayed there all year round.

13 SBAA, Fisher-Deschambault Papers, J.G. Harriott to H. Fisher, 22 November 1853. He advised him that several merchants were dealing with Mr. Kittson. "I am told that he has fitted out more than 50 for different parts of the country. Ecapo [Isidore Dumont] got for upwards of £200 in goods besides horses and carts."

14 Ibid., McGillivray to H. Fisher, 17 November 1853. All these people subsequently settled in Batoche.

15 See in particular: Father Belcourt to Father Cazeau, 25 November 1843, Account published as an appendix to *Rapports des missionnaires du diocèse de Québec* (Quebec, 1845-53), pp. 35-49, and SBAA, Provencher Collection, Father Laflèche to the Bishop of Quebec, June 1845.

16 A. Ross, *The Red River Settlement* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1972, reprint of the 1856 original), pp. 243-274.

17 SBAA, Provencher Papers, Father Laflèche, 1 June 1845.

18 Father Belcourt to Father Cazeau, 25 November 1843, Account published as an appendix to *Rapports des missionnaires du diocèse de Québec* (Quebec, 1845-53), p. 36.

19 SBAA, Provencher Papers, Father Laflèche, 1 June 1845.

20 Loc. cit.

21 SBAA, Taché Papers, Father Belcourt, 15 April 1857.

22 Ibid., Father Lestanc to Bishop Taché, 22 May 1871.

23 William F. Butler, *The Wild North Land* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1968, reprint), p. 47.

24 NA, MG26, A, Vol. 104, "Pétition des Métis du Lac Qu'Appelle, 1874," pp. 41996-41999. They made it clear that they wanted to be consulted about the nature of this legislation.

25 Ibid., "Pétition des Métis de Cypress Hills, septembre 1878." They evidently had not been consulted.

26 SABS, Department of Agriculture (Saskatchewan), Lands Branch files, AG II, southwest quarter of section 20 (river-front lots 21 and 22), township 42-1-3, Dumont's declaration.

27 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1878, 1880 [Father Fourmond].

28 SABS, Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead Files, No. 81184. Under pressure to declare that they were farmers, some probably hesitated or refused to say that they still went hunting.

29 SABS, Hillyard Mitchell Papers, F. Stobart to H. Mitchell, 29 May 1889.

30 Ibid., 10 June 1891.

31 SABS, Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead Files, No. 81184.

32 Ludger Gareau (1855-1954) arrived in the North-West from Quebec in 1878. He worked as a freighter, farmer and carpenter in Batoche. Xavier Letendre hired him between 1878 and 1884 for building his house and store. Gareau also built the presbytery and church in Batoche. During the insurrection of 1885, he was away on a trip to Quebec, and his house was destroyed by the Canadian army. In 1886, he left Batoche with his family and set up a ranch in Pincher Creek, Alberta. Philippe Garnot (ca. 1860-1916) was another French Canadian who settled in Batoche in 1881. He worked as a freighter and opened an inn in the village. He was Riel's secretary in 1885, and after his return from exile in 1886, he campaigned actively against the Conservatives in the Batoche area. In 1883, Garnot had a contract to freight 500 bags of flour from Prince Albert to Green Lake; PAM, MG9, A6, Guillaume Charette, Memoirs of Louis Goulet, p. 108.

33 GA, Richard Hardisty Papers, file 34, L. Clarke to D. Smith, 15 January 1972.

34 Norbert Delorme, son of Urbain Delorme, a rich merchant in St. François-Xavier, was in the North-West on his father's business in 1870. He put up some kind of small store or warehouse on his land in Batoche.

35 Coming from Pembina, Dakota, via St. François-Xavier, Manitoba, Abraham Montour arrived in Saskatchewan around 1871. He settled in Batoche on the west bank in 1877. His brother Pascal lived next to him. He was the son of "Bonhomme" Montour and a descendent of Nicolas Montour, a "peddler" who had arrived on the South Saskatchewan at the end of the 18th century. He left Batoche around

1900 and, after spending some time in Montana, settled on a ranch near Medicine Hat, Alberta.

36 André, Napoléon and Elie Nault, sons of André (Nin-Nin) Nault and Anastasie Landry of St. Vital, Manitoba, arrived in the North-West around 1878. In 1882, they took plots of land in Batoche. Their father was Louis Riel's cousin. The sons took part in the resistance of 1885.

37 SBAA, Taché Papers, Lists of freighters employed by the archdiocese [around the 1870s]; ibid., Maxime Lépine to Bishop Taché, 8 March 1892.

38 PAM, MG9, A6, Guillaume Charette, Memoirs of Louis Goulet, pp. 105-106.

39 Frédéric St-Germain emigrated to Saskatchewan from St. Vital, Manitoba, in 1882. He settled near Gabriel's Crossing. He died in Batoche at the age of 101 on 21 August 1953.

40 Prince Albert Historical Society, "Reminiscences of Patrice Fleury," [around 1940].

41 SABS, Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead Files, No. 21884.

42 DA, Letters of Fathers André, Fourmond, Moulin, Végréville to the Superior-General in Rome, Father Moulin to Father Sardou, 5 February 1885. The Father says that the price was 15 to 20 francs per 100 pounds. In 1885, the franc was worth about 20 American cents.

43 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1886 [Father Fourmond].

44 PAM, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, B. 276/6/1, p. 128, H. Adams to G.S. Davison, 31 July 1891.

45 Ibid., 15 July 1891, p. 126.

46 Ibid., B. 332/2/2, Prince Albert Office, 26 July 1891.

47 Ibid., B. 276/6/1, p. 128, 31 July 1891.

48 DA, Correspondence of Father Végréville, Xavier Letendre's account of the founding of Batoche, [around 1882].

49 NA, RG15, Vol. 914, file 892789, claim No. 15. Ludger Gareau testifies that the house was decorated with panelling and moulding brought from Winnipeg.

50 Loc. cit.

51 Moïse Parenteau was the half-brother of Letendre's wife Marguerite. Châlins Thomas was married to Hélène Letendre, and Edouard Dumont (brother of Gabriel) was married to Sophie Letendre, both of them sisters of Xavier. William Letendre was the son of Louis, Xavier's elder brother.

52 For more on Boucher, see the preceding chapter, note 137. Philippe Chamberland (1861-1954), a French Canadian settled in Bellevue, was requisitioned as a cook by Riel during the Battle of Batoche.

53 NA RG15, Vol. 914, file 892789, Xavier Letendre's testimony.

54 DA, Correspondence of Father Végréville, Xavier Letendre's account of the founding of Batoche, [around 1882].

55 NA, RG15, Vol. 932, claims register, No. 498; PAM, MG3, D2, Joseph Riel's account, 1897.

56 The first steam threshing machines arrived in Prince Albert around 1880. But the Prince Albert *Times* did not start advertising the agricultural implements of A. Harris & Sons until 1888. In view of the transportation problems, it would seem that the steamboat service (from 1881 on) preceded the arrival of the threshing machines. On the other hand, Xavier Letendre may have purchased some personally and taken care of the transportation.

57 In 1885, he had two sons at St. Boniface College, and in 1890, he had two daughters in boarding school at St. Anne's Convent, a bilingual institution run by the Faithful Companions of Jesus in Prince Albert. One of his sons, Jean (John) became a teacher.

58 *Prince Albert Times and Northwest Review*, 14 January 1891. This plan did not materialize. Letendre opted instead for raising cattle.

59 This ranch was situated about 17 miles southeast of Batoche near the future community of Alvena.

60 DA, Correspondence of Father Végréville, Xavier Letendre's account of the founding of Batoche, [around 1882].

61 NA, RG15, Vol. 914, file 892789, Jean-Baptiste Boyer's claim.

62 Ibid., Vol. 531, file 153221.

63 Ibid., Vol. 535, file 155386, Georges Fisher Jr.'s claim. Another son, Michel, was a merchant at Nut Lake.

64 Among those who had billiards tables were Baptiste Boyer, Xavier Letendre, Georges Fisher and Joseph Vandal.

65 NA, RG15, Vol. 535, file 155386, Georges Fisher Jr.'s claim.

66 The son of a French Canadian, Emmanuel Beaugrand dit Champagne, and a Métis woman settled in St. Norbert, Manitoba. In 1849, his father was one of the richest farmers in Red River. See PAM, Red River Settlement Census, 1849, No. 448; ibid., Hudson's Bay Company Archives, B. 235/a/15, "Extracts from William Black's Red River Journal," 17 October 1853. See preceding chapter, note 114.

67 NA, RG15, Vol. 914, file 892789, Ludger Gareau's testimony; ibid., claims register, Vol. 931, No. 129, Emmanuel Champagne's claim; SBAA, Taché Papers, E. Champagne to Bishop Taché, 6 March 1886.

68 Born in St. Norbert, Manitoba, Salomon Venne (ca. 1829-1922) was the son of Pierre-Jean Venne and Marie Charette and was married to Josephte St-Arnaud. His family was one of the most prosperous and active ones in the area.

69 NA, RG15, Vol. 916, file 892789 and claims register, Vol. 931, No. 99.

70 SABS, Hillyard Mitchell Papers, accounts, Patrice Parenteau, 1895-96; *Henderson's Directory of the North West Territories*, 1895-1905. The location of his warehouse is not specified in the documents, but it may have been on lot 46.

71 NA, RG15, Vol. 914, file 892789, H. Walters's declaration and Ludger Gareau's testimony.

72 SBAA, Journal of Father Gabriel Cloutier, 1886, Joseph Charette's testimony, p. 5265.

73 Loc. cit.

74 The two "foreign-owned" stores were the first to be seized by Riel and the provisional government in March 1885. Since their arrival in the fall of 1884, the Kerr brothers had been reporting on the activities of the Métis to the government. After their flight from Batoche, they took a strong position against the Métis. Afterwards, they had trouble gathering testimony to support their claims and maintained that they did not receive a fair indemnity.

75 NA, RC15, Vol. 513, file 145780, G. and J. Kerr to the Minister of the Interior, 15 November 1887.

76 A merchant, stockbreeder and politician, Mitchell was rich and influential. He arrived in Duck Lake in 1877 and remained there until 1920. He died in Victoria, B.C., in 1923.

77 On Macdonald's National Policy and its impact in the West, see V.C. Fowke, *The National Policy and the Wheat Economy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957) and Kevin H. Burley, ed., *The Development of Canada's Staples, 1867-1938: A Documentary Collection* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970). The latter statement is corroborated by an examination of the files of the Department of the Interior from 1886 and 1900 and especially by the correspondence about Métis lands and their petitions.

78 Jean-Baptiste Boucher Jr. (1861-1943) was a deputy lands officer from 1888 to 1895. At about the same time, Jean-François Hubert Huysmans de Neftal, a minor French nobleman, worked in the lands office at Duck Lake. He died in 1904 around the age of 30.

79 A native of Quebec, Odilon St. Denis (1861-1934) served at the Batoche and Duck Lake posts during the 1890s. He was married to

Marie Boucher (Lavallée) of St. Louis, where he owned a farm and where he later retired. Inspector Joseph-Victor Bégin (1856-1932) was in Battleford and Prince Albert between 1886 and 1910.

80 See ch. 1, "Society and Lifestyle," section on Interaction with the Amerindians.

81 NA, RG18, C1, Vol. 2836, Inspector Bégin to the Commanding Officer in Prince Albert, 18 May 1887; ibid., A.J. Mountain to the Commanding Officer, 16 September 1888; ibid., A. Huot to the Commanding Officer, 31 May 1890.

82 Charles Laviolette and William Bruce were two known Métis recruits, but they did not stay for long within the force.

83 GA, Richard Hardisty Papers, file 31, "Condensed Report of a meeting of Métis winterers of St-Laurent," 31 December 1871.

84 Ibid., file 34, L. Clarke to D.A. Smith, 15 January 1872.

85 DA, Correspondence of Father Végréville, Xavier Letendre's account of the founding of Batoche, [around 1882].

86 This breakdown of their farming activities is derived from SABS, Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead Files, No. 81184.

87 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1879 [Father André].

88 Ibid., 1876.

89 NA, MG26, A, Vol. 104, Petition of the Métis of Lac Qu'Appelle, 11 September 1874; ibid., Resolution of the Métis of Cypress Hills, 1878; ibid., Petition of the Métis of St-Laurent-de-Grandin, February 1878.

90 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1884 [Father Fourmond].

91 SABS, Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead Files, No. 81184.

92 NA, RG15, Vol. 923, claim No. 493; ibid., MG26, A, Vol. 106, J. and G.A. Kerr to John A. Macdonald, 21 April 1885.

93 NA, RG15, Vol. 914, file 892789, No. 15, Ludger Gareau's testimony; ibid., Vol. 931, No. 129, Emmanuel Champagne's testimony; ibid., Vol. 916, file 892789, No. 99, Salomon Venne's testimony; Vol. 928, No. 708, A. Macdonald on Georges Fisher's claim.

94 *Le Manitoba* (St. Boniface), "Échos du Nord-Ouest," 31 July 1884.

95 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1884 [Father Fourmond].

96 GA, Faithful Companions of Jesus Collection, Annals, St. Anne's Convent, 1884.

97 *McPhillips' Alphabetical and Business Directory of Saskatchewan, North West Territories* (Qu'Appelle: "The Progress" Book of Job

Office, 1888), p. 22. It should be noted that these figures are based on the seed grain given out by the government.

98 NA, RG15, Vol. 105, file 144363, Petition of St-Laurent-de-Grandin, 24 February 1886, J. Caron, O. Régnier et al.; ibid., MG26, G, Vol. 737, pp. 298286-298287, Petition of Alex Fisher, P. Garnot et al, April 1888; ibid., RG15, Vol. 589, file 190886, Petition of Letendre, Nolin et al., December 1888.

99 Ibid., RG15, Vol. 105, file 144363, Petition of St-Laurent-de-Grandin, 24 February 1886; ibid., Communication of Minister of the Interior T. White to the Privy Council, 23 May 1887.

100 SABS, Department of Agriculture (Saskatchewan), Lands Branch files, AG II, lots 19 and 63, T43-1-3.

101 NA, RG18, C1, Vol. 32, No. 221-289, Superintendent A. Bowen Perry to the Commissioner, 25 March 1889.

102 *Prince Albert Times and Northwest Review*, 20 February 1890.

103 NA, RG18, C1, Vol. 2837, Sergeant Bird to the Commanding Officer, Prince Albert, 13 November 1893; ibid., 7 May 1894.

104 See ch. 5, "Land Claims in the South Saskatchewan River Area."

105 SABS, Department of Agriculture (Saskatchewan), Lands Branch files, AG II, lots 1 to 12 and 17 to 19, T43-1-3.

106 Ibid., lot 3, T43-1-3; François Parenteau on lot 4 had fewer animals, but cultivated 55 acres between 1913 and 1919.

107 These figures are derived specifically from lots 53 to 69.

108 A quantitative analysis of land claims in the area, and more specifically, of lots 1 to 13, T45-1-3, lots 11 to 40, T45-27-2 and lots 3 to 12, T45-28-2, south bank.

109 SABS, Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead Files, No. 442-62. Bélanger and Charette owned freighting firms in Battleford and Jackfish Lake respectively. They also set up ranches in those centres, which were even less attractive to immigrants.

110 Née Josephte Paul (1828-1928), she and her husband Joseph Tourond emigrated from St. François-Xavier with their family in 1882. They settled in the so-called Tourond coulee (Fish Creek).

111 SABS, Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead Files, No. 881793 (lot 56); No. 2328642 (lot 58); ibid., Department of Agriculture (Saskatchewan), Lands Branch files, AG II, lots 59, 68 and 69, T43-1-3.

112 Ibid., Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead files, No. 4049585. The ranch was situated on the southwest quarter of section 16, T41-28-2.

113 SABS, Department of Agriculture (Saskatchewan), Lands Branch files, AGII, file 3744, Petition of the inhabitants of St-Antoine-de-Padoue to Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney, 13 May 1887.

114 The industrial schools were special schools intended for Amerindians and Métis, put up by the federal government and directed by religious communities (especially the Oblates) in the Canadian West, starting in the 1880s. The aim of these residential schools was to suppress the culture and lifestyle of the natives. They were taught mainly trades and farming methods with a view to turning them into a class of workers. The program was a failure for both groups. There was an industrial school for Amerindians in Duck Lake and schools for Métis in Lebret, Saskatchewan, and St-Paul-des-Métis, Alberta.

115 See communications from Minister of the Interior White to the Privy Council: NA, RG15, Vol. 105, file 144363, 23 May 1887 and Vol. 589, file 198086, 5 March 1889. According to White, even Bishop Taché was against the industrial schools, saying that the Métis needed practice rather than theory.

116 Conversation with Sister Irène Schmidt, Prince Albert, 1976.

117 Conversation with Mr. Fred Anderson, Duck Lake, 1976.

118 NA, RC18, C1, Vol. 2837, Sergeant Bird to the Commanding Officer, 4 June 1894. This root called "seneca" or "snake root" had exceptional curative properties.

119 *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, 6 December 1889 and 14 February 1890.

120 Ibid., 29 November 1889 and 21 March 1890.

121 GA, Barnett LeRoy, "The Buffalo Bone Trade," unpublished manuscript, n.d.

122 Ibid., D. 621, Dixon Brothers, Maple Creek, 1882-1906. The North-Western Fertilizer Company of Chicago paid $19 a ton in 1888.

123 SABS, Hillyard Mitchell Papers, contract dated 5 November 1885.

124 Ibid., contract dated 12 February 1898.

125 Ibid., Father Fourmond to H. Mitchell, 9 February 1889.

126 Testimony of Mrs. Adélaïde Ranger (née Pilon), Batoche, 1976.

127 Conversation with Mrs. Justine Nogier (Caron) (née Branconnier), Batoche, 1976.

128 Conversation with Mrs. Alexandrine Nicolas (née Fleury), Duck Lake, 1981. The doctor was called only in case of complications.

129 On this subject, see for example, D. Owram, *The Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. 168-191.

130 NA, RG15, Vol. 632, file 237041, Father Gariépy to John A. Macdonald, 22 November 1889. The claims of Xavier Letendre, Ludger Gareau, Salomon Venne, Georges Fisher and Jean Caron for losses suffered in 1885 give evidence of this prosperity.

131 NA, MG26, A, Vol. 106, G.A. Kerr to John A. Macdonald, April 21, 1885; ibid., C.A. Boulton to his father, 23 May 1885.

132 SAB (Regina), R.K. Allan, Diary kept during the North West Rebellion, 1885.

133 GA, James A. Johnston Papers, Letter to Mrs. J. Grey, 2 June 1885. He was a member of the 10th Royal Grenadiers. It was mainly the Boulton Scouts and the Grenadiers who seized furs, animals, household items, etc.

134 Colonel Winslow of the Midland regiment seized the "Marie-Antoinette" clock and transported it to Ontario. A relic of the war, it is now on exhibit in Millbrook, Ontario, and remains a symbol of animosity between Orangemen and French Catholics (author's personal research).

135 NA, RG15, Vol. 928, Georges Fisher Sr.'s claim, John A. Macdonald to G. Fisher, 23 May 1885.

136 NA, RG15, Vol. 914, file 892789, No. 15, Xavier Letendre's testimony.

137 SBAA, Taché Papers, E. Champagne to Bishop Taché, 6 March 1886.

138 DA, Letters of Fathers André, Fourmond, Moulin and Végréville to the Superior-General in Rome, Father Moulin to Father Soullier, 17 June 1893.

139 This is what appears from the parish registers and the applications for scrip on file at the Department of the Interior (NA, RG15).

140 PADA, Parish registers of Lac Maskeg (Aldina), (St. Vital) Battleford, Bonne Madone, Leask and Jackfish Lake.

141 SAB (Regina), Surveyors' Correspondence, I.320, file 1234, E.W. Hubbell to E. Deville, 30 January 1906.

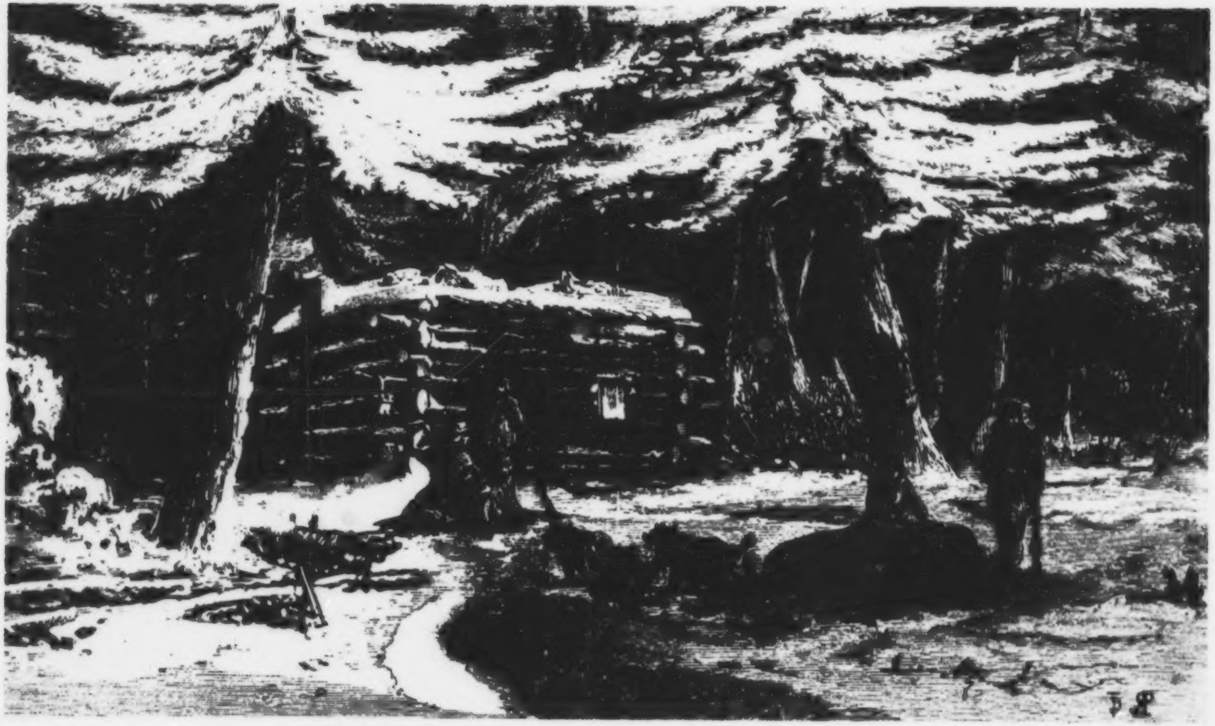


Fig. 35 Métis winter camp or "hivernement" at Shell River, Saskatchewan around 1862-63. *Glenbow Archives, Calgary, NA 1240-3.*

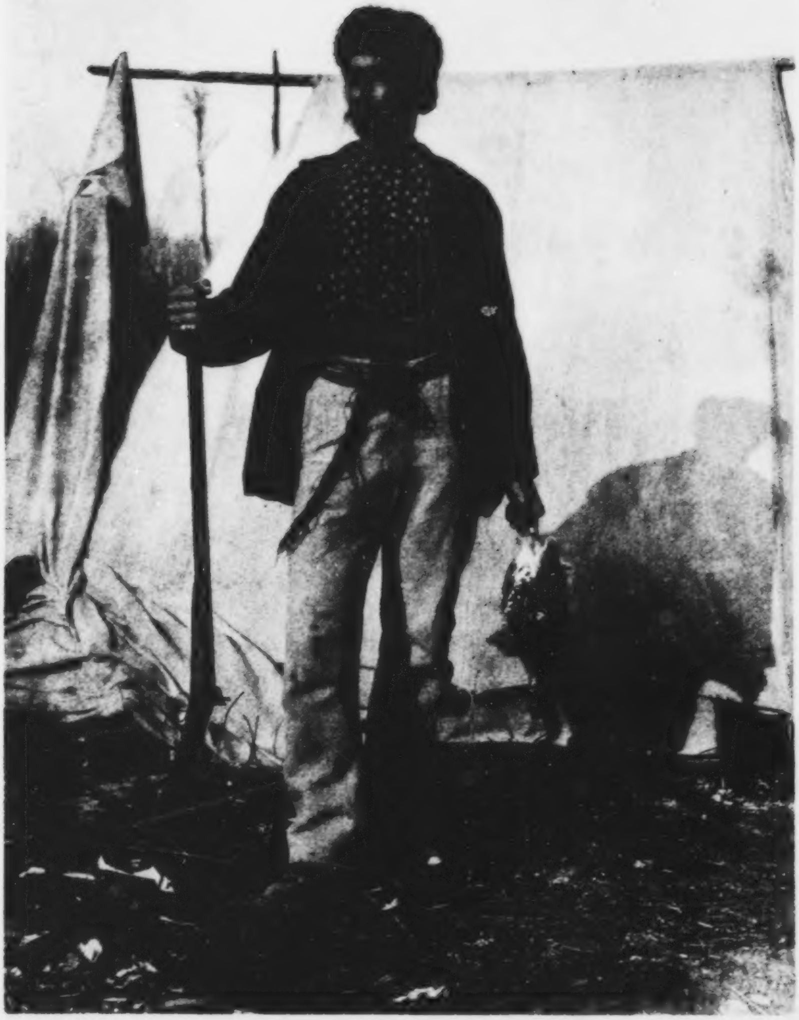


Fig. 36 Maxime Marion, Métis guide. *National Archives of Canada, C-79643.*

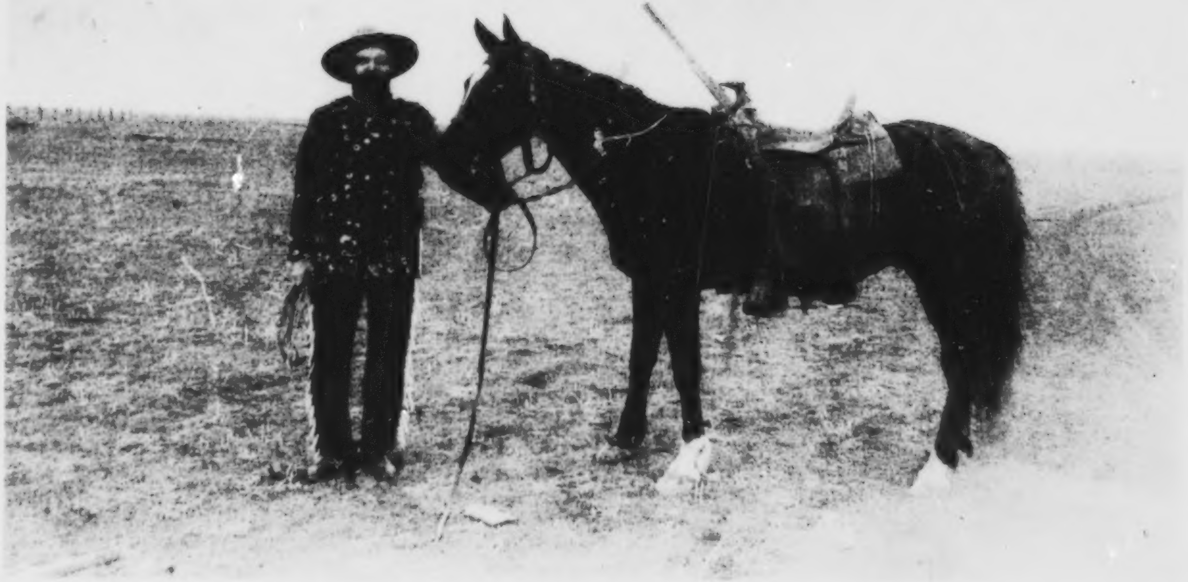


Fig. 37 Métis scout in service with the North-West Mounted Police. *Glenbow Archives, Calgary, NA 635-2; original preserved at the Kalamazoo Public Museum, Michigan.*

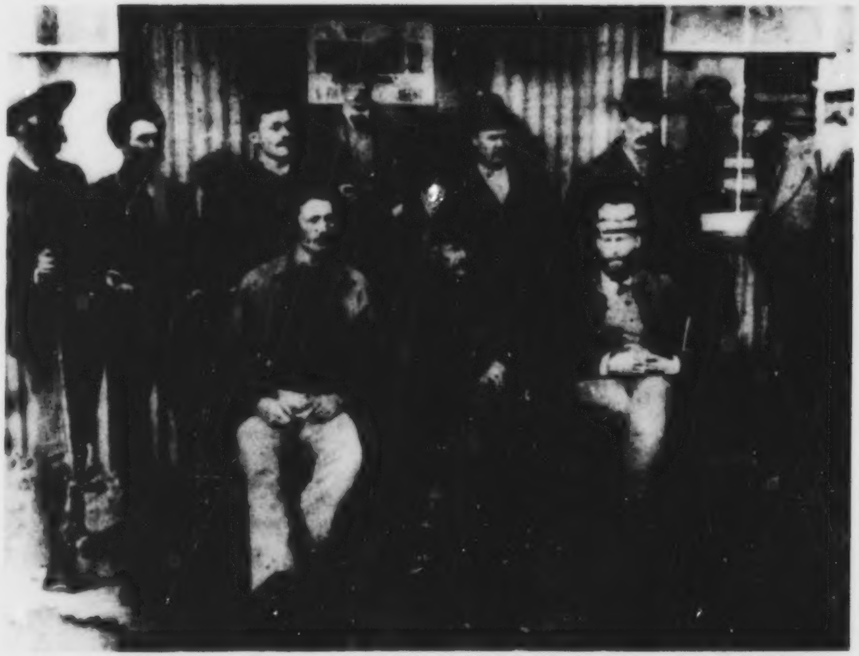


Fig. 38 Batoche and Duck Lake merchants in front of the Massey-Harris office in Duck Lake, 1894. Seated left to right: MLA Charles-Eugène Boucher, Xavier Letendre and W.J. Poser. Standing left to right; Georges Fisher, Damase Racette, Gustave Fournier, W.S. Urton, M. St-Louis, Patrice Parenteau and R.S. Mackenzie. *University of Saskatchewan Library, Morton Mss. C55/2/10.5M.*

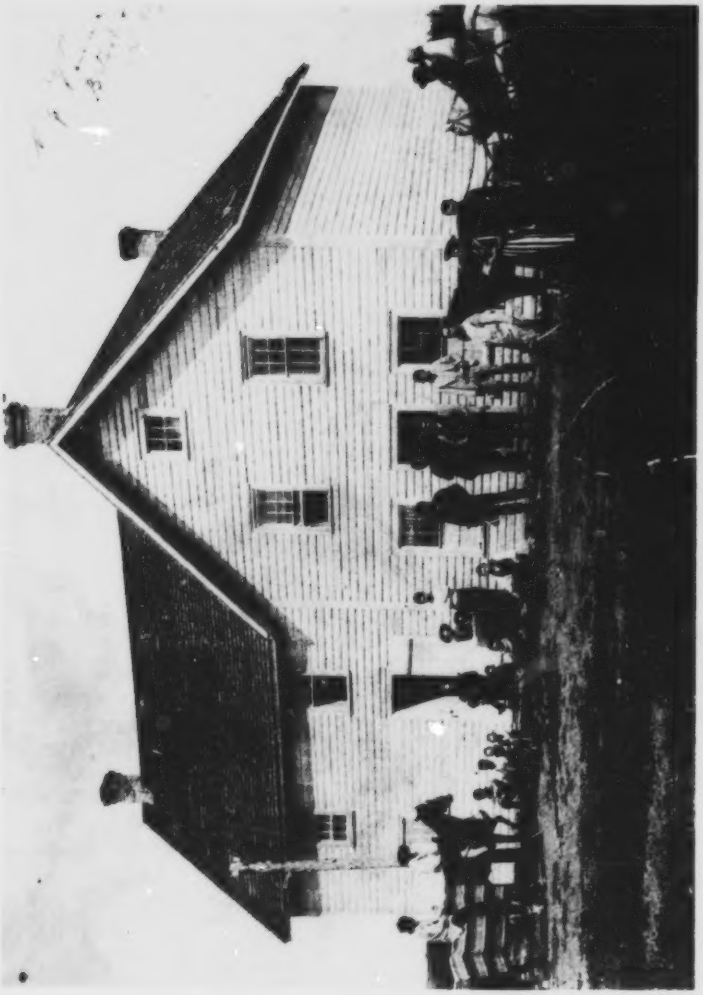


Fig. 39 Barracks of the North-West Mounted Police at Batoche in 1891 (former Baptiste Boyer house and store). Standing in centre with arms crossed is the Métis scout Napoléon Venne. *Canadian Parks Service, Battleford National Historic Park.*

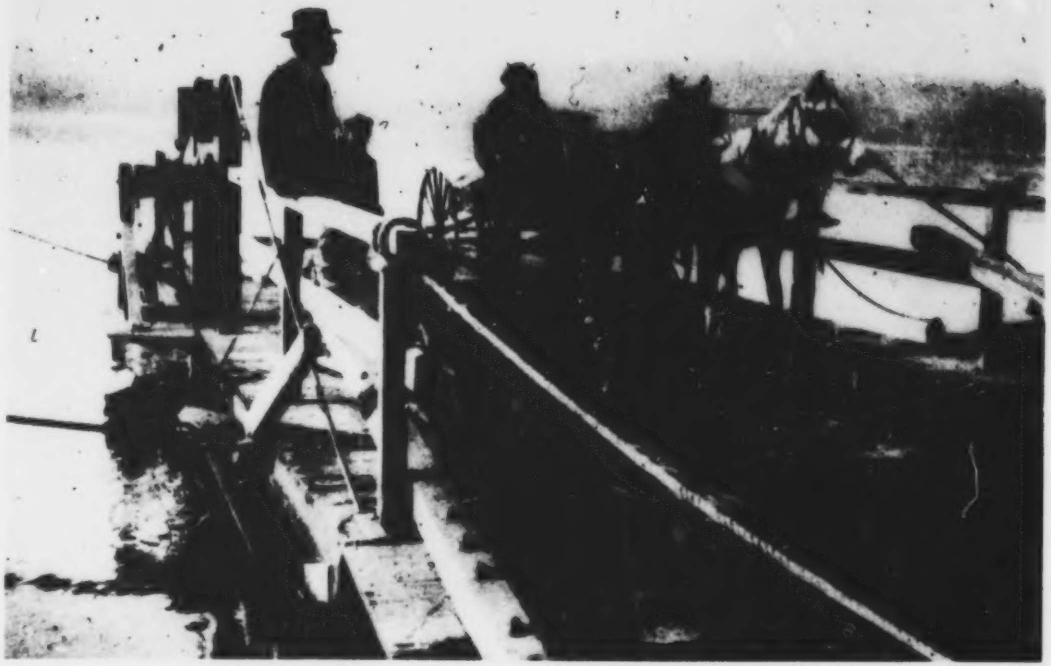


Fig. 40 Ferry at Batoche Crossing in 1910. *Canadian Parks Service, Duck Lake Museum Collection.*

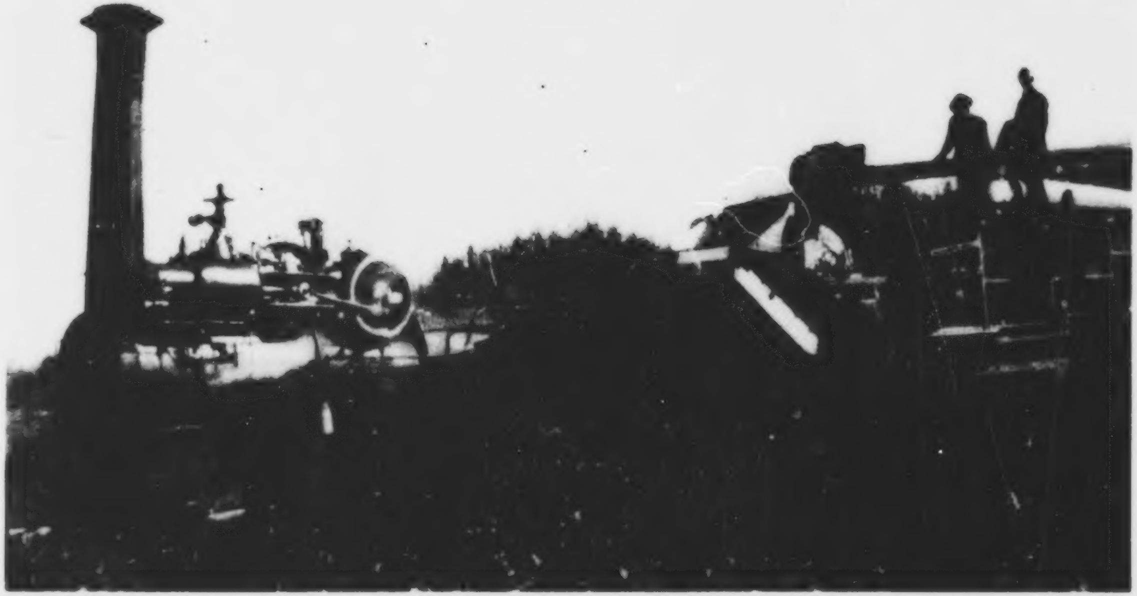


Fig. 41 Baptiste Larocque's steam threshing outfit at Duck Lake in 1908. *Saskatchewan Archives Board, Regina, R-A8248 (1).*

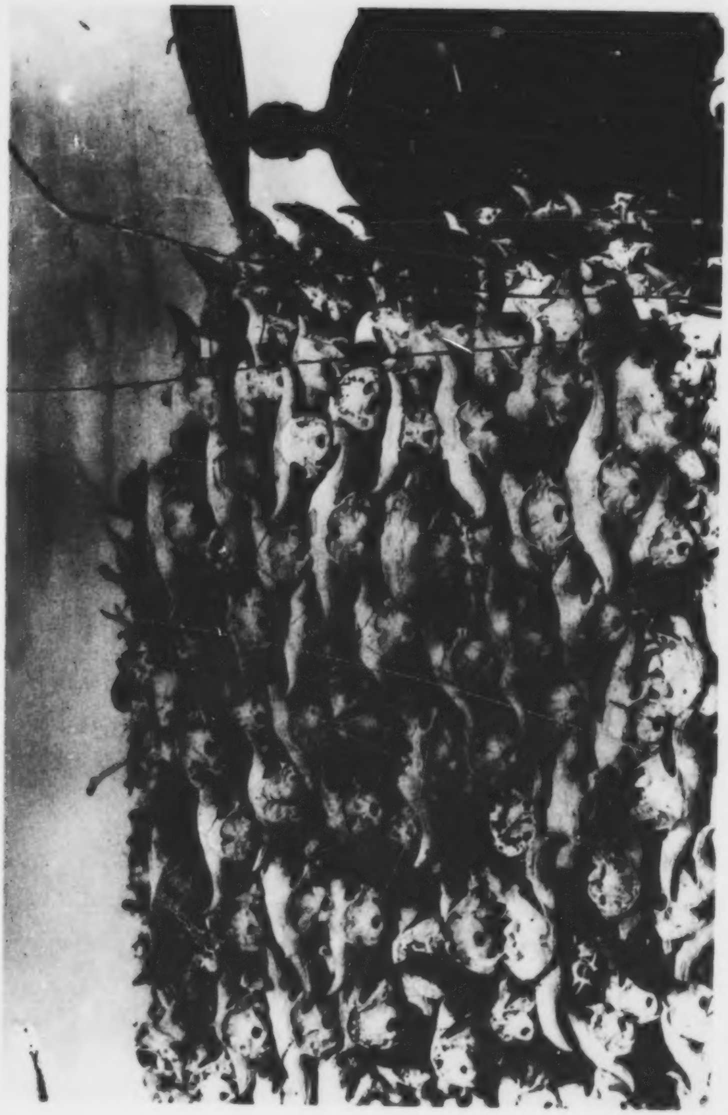


Fig. 42 Close-up of a collection of buffalo skulls, Saskatoon, 1890. *University of Alberta Archives, William Pearce Collection, 74-169/15/93. Photo: H.D. Lumsden.*

Fig. 43 Piles of buffalo bones collected by the Métis, 1890. *Univerity of Alberta Archives, William Pearce Collection, 74-169/15/92. Photo: H.D. Lumsden.*

V LAND CLAIMS IN THE SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER AREA

MÉTIS CONCEPT OF LANDHOLDING: THE MANITOBA PRECEDENT AND EXPERIENCE

The native populations of North America, although involved in some intertribal conflicts over hunting and camping grounds, did not pursue a tradition of owning land individually or permanently. The arrival of the European in the 17th century gradually challenged and eventually encroached upon the native communal and migratory patterns of land tenure. The newcomers grouped in settlements and, as they became more numerous, demanded more land. Initially welcomed by the Amerindians to share the land, Europeans soon began to displace them.

> *The Indians were soon regarded as an embarrassment, since what was being taken belonged to them. Depending on time and place, different methods of handling the Indians were tried. Often they were treated benevolently, sometimes enslaved, frequently massacred, occasionally annihilated, or systematically assimilated as individuals or tribes. When all else failed they were banished into the hinterland to await the next advance of civilization.*[1]

During the French colonial period (ca. 1608-1763), the right of indigenous peoples to their ancestral lands was vested in the "benevolent power of the sovereign." The principle of native land rights was reaffirmed by the British in the Proclamation of 1763 which also set aside "western lands" as a "reserve" for Amerindians. The British practice was adopted by the Canadian government in 1867, but the conflicting concepts of European land ownership and native landholding remained. The treaties and land concessions, which were negotiated in Western Canada beginning in 1871, were attempts at solving the question of native land claims.[2] Although in these agreements the Amerindians were the losers, treaties provided a measure of protection against unofficial encroachment and recognized, in principle, native or aboriginal rights.[3]

The rights of the Métis as an indigenous people of the North-West, were not acknowledged by the Hudson's Bay Company nor by the Canadian government until Riel's Provisional Government of Red River secured some concessions in 1869-70. The Manitoba Act recognized the principle of Métis native land rights by setting aside 1 400 000 acres for their use. The Métis were excluded, however, from the federal Indian Act of 1876 which provided for various fishing and hunting rights as well as social welfare programs. Treaty No. 3 in 1873 was the first to state that both Amerindians and Métis had claim to lands. But the commissioners also stipulated that only those Métis who lived with or as natives and did not claim lands like Eurocanadians could benefit from treaty provisions. This principle was reiterated by Lieutenant-Governor Morris during the negotiations for Treaty No. 6 at Fort Carlton in the Saskatchewan district in 1876.[4] Notwithstanding the fact that many Métis acted as interpreters and intermediaries during treaty negotiations, few wished to identify themselves as Indians in order to benefit from the treaty.

The Métis were convinced of their right to land by virtue of their native parentage and early occupancy. They had begun to claim lots at Red River as early as 1810.[5] Occupancy of the lands, irregular at the beginning, increased after the establishment of the mission of St. Boniface in 1818. Cultivation, however, did not really expand until around 1850-60. Most Métis only wintered on their farms which comprised a vegetable garden, some cattle, a field of oats and hay and perhaps a small wheat field, especially by the 1860s. The Métis occupied riverlots an average of six to 12 chains wide and up to two miles deep. This custom had been brought to Red River and other western settlements by their French-Canadian fathers or ancestors. There were also other particular traditions of landholding. The land at the rear of their farms, known as "the outer two miles" (bouts de terres), was reserved for hay and woodlots. In the case of small lots or "emplacements," such as at "la pointe" in St. Boniface, some common property (a "commune")[6] was reserved elsewhere for the settlers.

These customs as well as the Métis' flexible approach to individual land ownership and exchanges were not understood and were even scorned by newcomers. The Métis and the French-Canadians who took up lands informally "according to the custom of the country," or without registration or title, were labelled as squatters. When the Hudson's Bay Company conducted a lot survey of property boundaries of the Red River Settlement in 1836-38[7] and proceeded to make an inventory of all lands granted, sold or exchanged, it encountered strong resistance on the part of the Métis and found it impossible to resolve the situation. Contemporary accounts suggest that the Métis informed Company officials of their land transactions only when it was necessary to establish a claim to obtain a loan or provide collateral. There was a general mistrust of company regulations and a conviction by the Métis that the land was theirs as original occupants. Concurrently, the Company surveys and administration of lands were inadequate. The results was an incomplete and often inaccurate record of land occupation and exchange as illustrated in Register "B."[8] Father Belcourt described the system, and the accompanying confusion or "galimathias," in the following terms in 1842:

> *The counsel for the defence [in the land case pleaded] got the upper hand. It is a tacit admission of their [Hudson Bay Company] helplessness since those who are on the land without contracts are masters just as those to whom they were given (the bourgeois) [sic]. It is an admirable hullabaloo in the holding of land: those who were well enough off to pay for their land before leaving the service possessed these lands against their better judgment. When, upon seeing them, they did not find them to their liking, it was in fact their fault, since they purchased them without seeing them, blindfolded. Those who, more astute, wanted to see the land before purchasing, arrived at Red River, paid an old colonist for his house, his finished stable, this old colonist would give up his place and go get another piece of land; sometimes they spoke about it, sometimes they said nothing; my man went about his business seeding and harvesting. Some have a small unwitnessed note from the governor, others have old papers from Lord Selkirk. All of them, just as all those who have no documents, saw the lines of their lands drawn several times: some saw their fields cut crosswise, other were dumbfounded to suddenly see their house in the field given to their neighbour. It is owing to galimathias that some agreed to remain as they were.*[9] [Translation]

The first settlement spread out southward along the Red River to St. Boniface, St. Vital and St. Norbert, and westward from the forks of the Red and the Assiniboine rivers to St. François-Xavier. Until the 1860s, there was no urgent need to register these riverlots or occupy them permanently. By then though, the increasing presence of foreigners in the colony concerned the Métis and they were increasingly sensitive to Canadian government claims to the lands of the North-West (Rupert's Land). In 1869, the Hudson's Bay Company, by virtue of its charter of 1670, negotiated the sale of the territory and all its lands to the Government of Canada. Both authorities showed little concern for recognizing or guaranteeing Métis rights to their land. The Métis protested and negotiated the terms of the Manitoba Act which formally recognized their aboriginal rights and their custom of landholding.

Section 31 of the Manitoba Act (1870) set aside 1 400 000 acres for the Métis, and Section 32 guaranteed them and all other occupants possession of the lands they occupied. In spite of these provisions, the numerous changes made to these sections of the Act between 1872 and 1880 greatly reduced these rights.[10] For example, in 1873, an amendment excluded heads of family from a share in the land. The following year, another amendment restored this right, but in the form of scrip. Scrip was a certificate worth $80, $160 and $240; it was redeemable in land, issued by the federal government. It was granted to the Métis of Manitoba and later of the North-West Territories between 1876 and 1901, as a means of extinguishing their aboriginal claims. Conditions of the complex and confusing system varied over the years; at the outset of 1871, scrip could only be exchanged for land in the name of and for the bearer. It was initially granted only to the children of the heads of families, but money scrip was later issued to heads of families and as part of a Supplementary Issue. The 1899-1900 issue in the North-West was redeemable in land or money.

Despite some legislation established to protect the rights of Métis children, most of their claims passed into the hands of speculators through powers of attorney or assignments.[11] An inquiry by D.N. Sprague[12] revealed that few Métis children ended up exchanging their scrip for land and fewer in obtaining title to it. Heads of family were not any more successful. The land offered was not divided into riverlots and assignment was done by lottery. However, contrary to the argument generally advanced that the Métis did not want their lands, they did hasten to register their claims in 1873 allowed under Section 32 despite the difficulties, and in many cases, the impossibility of meeting increasingly strict government requirements regarding occupancy improvements. According to research estimates to date, the land granted to Métis in Manitoba between 1876 and 1887 amounted to less than 600 000 acres.[13] The plunder was not attributed solely to the federal government and its collusion with real estate agencies. Manitoba laws and judicial illegalities after 1878 contributed as much as federal policy to the creation of an intolerable situation and provoked a massive exodus of Métis.[14] While the Métis constituted the majority of Manitoba's population in 1871, numbering about 10 000, by 1885 they represented about seven percent.[15] The vast majority had headed northwest, to the district of Saskatchewan.

SURVEYS AND HOMESTEAD ENTRIES BETWEEN 1878 AND 1885 (SEE APPENDIX A)

The Métis began to leave Manitoba soon after the débâcle of the 1870s. Most of them were already familiar with the Assiniboia or Saskatchewan districts. At their "hivernements" (wintering camps) in Prairie-Ronde and Petite-Ville, which were inhabited since the 1860s, and in settlements such as Batoche's Crossing during the 1870s, they settled on riverlots informally demarcated according to local custom. Land claims extended along both banks of the South Saskatchewan, between Gabriel's (Dumont's) Crossing to the south, passing through Batoche's Crossing, St-Laurent-de-Grandin, and as far as Gardepuis' or (Philippe) Gariépy's Crossing, a stretch of about 25 miles.

Before 1875, the Canadian government had not surveyed the lands along the South Saskatchewan. It was in this year that surveyors began laying out the village of Prince Albert and surrounding lands. In the beginning, the few Métis settled at the various crossings to the south were not too concerned about these developments. They left regularly to hunt on the Prairies and did not work their land much, except to plant vegetable gardens. However, the unfortunate experience of many compatriots in Manitoba prompted an increasing number to conform to Dominion land regulations or take up formal residence on their lands by erecting buildings and fences. The negotiation of Treaty No. 6 in 1876 with the Plains Cree in the Fort Carlton area convinced the Métis that it was time to reach an agreement with the government or to obtain titles to their lands. This treaty signalled to them the imminent arrival of Eurocanadian settlers and the eventual displacement of native inhabitants. In 1875, encouraged by the experience of their fellow citizens at Qu'Appelle, they had already sent petitions to the government asking for a survey of the St. Laurent district.

In 1878-79, Mr. Aldous and Mr. Reid were sent to the district with instructions to do a preliminary survey.[16] These two men were both English-speaking and could not carry on a conversation with the few Métis they met in the fall of 1878. They therefore interpreted the absence of many inhabitants as proof on non-residence. They adopted the township surveying system (six square miles subdivided into 36 sections, each a mile square or 640 acres; further subdivided into four quarter sections or homesteads approximately 160 acres each) on the west bank of the river, even though the layout of properties suggested riverlots. About 20 families had established a *pied-à-terre* or a more permanent residence on the west bank between Gabriel's Crossing and St-Laurent-de-Grandin since 1873.[17] Most of them, except for Joseph "Dodet" Parenteau and Alex Fisher, were freighters and hunters, which would of course explain the absence when the surveyors came. A block of about 12 miles along the east bank, identified as the "St. Laurent Settlement," was surveyed into 71 riverlots.[18] However, since Mr. Aldous and Mr. Reid saw few permanent residences, they drew only a few lines and staked a few pickets at the boundaries of each section of the block. According to an account by Father Végréville, the surveyors used their township system of square lots without regard for the riverlot custom of the Métis.

> *The intention was to take the lands in riverlots 10 chains wide and 2 miles deep. In the first surveys, five years ago [1878], only a few miles were surveyed, like the rest of the country, in squares. A line was drawn to serve as a basis for several other miles but not one piece of land was surveyed, its borders demarcated ....*[19] [Translation]

A note from the Department of the Interior in 1885 stated that "all lands *found in occupation of* half-breeds at time of survey of St. Laurent in 1878 were subdivided into lots having 10 chains river frontage and running back an average of two miles"[20] [emphasis mine]. It neglected to specify, however, that only the general boundaries of the block of land *set aside* for riverlots had been marked. In effect, only a few individual lots had been demarcated or surveyed. A map signed by Aldous in 1879 confirmed this (see Fig. 44). In his notebook he reported only 10 inhabitants on lots 1 to 19. He also indicated that he numbered the lots, but added that it was not necessary to trace the lot lines for lands south of lot 25. "Lots number 20 to 29 inclusive are only claimed by the Carrières;

they are not at present in occupation."[21] He did not report any occupants on lots 28 to 43 and added that lots 44, 45 and 46, as well as 49 to 71, were not occupied. André Letendre-Batoche (in fact not André but his brother Xavier) was reported as occupant of lots 47 and 48.[22] Nonetheless, according to declarations made to support their claims in 1884, others were settled on these lands at that time, among them Cuthbert (Corbet) Fayant on lot 35 since 1873, Emmanuel Champagne on lots 42, 43 and 44 since 1877, and George Ness on lots 62 and 63 also since 1877.[23]

The west bank was surveyed by J.L. Reid in 1879 according to the township system adopted for the Canadian North-West. Although the inhabitants, more numerous than on the east bank during the 1870s, had divided their properties into riverlots, Reid ignored this fact. It was later to be said that the Métis had settled there after the surveying.[24] However, a review of the land applications made by the Métis in 1884 suggests that there had been at least eight families on the west side at Batoche's Crossing by the early 1870s. Reid's notebook also contradicted this statement. He reported some inhabitants on sections 31, 32 and 19, adding that "both banks of the river are settled by French half-breeds."[25]

Requests for a Resurvey

At the beginning, few complained or even noticed the situation. It was not until the arrival of another group of compatriots from Manitoba in 1882 and after the transition to an agriculture-based economy and lifestyle that the Métis were moved to assert their claims. Many disputed the size of their lots or the poorly-defined boundaries. The area around Gariépy's Crossing in township 45 (hereafter called Boucher and part of the later parish of St-Louis-de-Langevin) was particularly contentious. It had been surveyed according to the township system in 1881 and 1882. Some of these lands were settled by the Métis at the time of or shortly after the survey. But at least eight Métis had staked out claims before 1880, two of them as early as 1871-72. Mrs. Marguerite Ouellette, Louis Schmidt and Octave Régnier held disputed claims. The last two, who had settled in 1881-82, were on lots already claimed by Hayter Reed and Philippe Gariépy. They could not make entry until the boundaries of these old claims were resolved. Maxime Lépine, Michel Dumas and Louis Letendre, who had settled on T45-27-2 (township 45, row 27, west of the 2nd meridian) between 1872 and 1882, refused to enter their lands, thinking they would be resurveyed into riverlots. There was a particularly serious problem in T45-28-2. The area was settled by the Bouchers, Bremners, Richards, Boyers and others in 1882 and 1883. Reports circulated that these lands were part of a tract which had been sold to a colonization company. This possibility created much apprehension among the Métis. It was generally believed that it was best not to make entry, pending an inquiry and a resurvey. These disputes were the subject of a petition addressed to Lieutenant-Governor Laird and to the Council of the North-West Territories by the inhabitants of Batoche, Duck Lake and Boucher in 1881.[26] The same year Louis Schmidt and settlers at the small Boucher settlement sent a request to the Minister of the Interior through Joseph Royal. They begged the government to resurvey their lands in order to facilitate the entry of land claims and obtaining of patents.[27]

The opening of the land office in Prince Albert in 1881 had the effect of multiplying requests for surveys and for resurveys to convert land into riverlots. According to a report by Father Végréville to the Surveyor General in 1884:

> *... since the opening of the land office, these poor people have been asking that their lands be surveyed in order to be able to enter land claims ... I wrote to Ottawa several times through Mr. Duck in Prince Albert with no luck ... and several settlers have left.*[28] [Translation]

He added that in February 1883 Father Leduc had presented the Métis' grievances in Ottawa.

> *It was promised in writing that the occupied lands would be surveyed into riverlots ... and that the surveying would be done next fall [1883]. But nothing has been done ... the people fear they will lose everything ... that straight parallel lines will cut across their fields, through their homes.*[29] [Translation]

However, the government did not see the need to resurvey the land into riverlots. As a solution, it suggested dividing the sections into legal subdivisions,[30] thus enabling the colonists who had settled on the lands surveyed into sections in the township system to register them as riverlots.

> *It is not the intention of the Government to cause any resurveys to be made. Of course any subdivision differing from the regular survey they may desire, they [Métis] can procure for themselves when the lands come into their possession.*[31]

In May 1884 the land agent, Mr. Duck, was asked to investigate and report all claims. In the interim, the village of Batoche had been surveyed.[32]

Mr. Duck, the agent at the Prince Albert Land Office since 1881, understood French but not very well, despite statements to the contrary by Commissioner William Pearce.[33] In 1883, Valmore Gauvreau became sub-agent. While he was a Francophone, he was not especially sympathetic to the Métis.[34] When the agents received notice to visit the St. Laurent district in the spring of 1884 to take declarations from the Métis who wished to register their land claims, they encountered a great deal of mistrust and apprehension. Accompanied by Father André, they gathered applications from most of the occupants that were there, about 70 in all (from 99, excluding Duck Lake), but met opposition from a determined and agitated minority. According to Pearce, in a report to the Department of the Interior, "the result showed the necessary of the Rev. Père's influence, as, even with it, about 15% of the claimants though visited by Mr. Duck at their houses, refused to make any application."[35] Other applications were gathered in the fall, about 100 in the entire district. Opposition came mainly from those who had settled at St. Louis or on lands which had been surveyed into quarter-sections. Despite the assurance that their claims would be recognized and registered as legal subdivisions, many were obstinately refused to apply. "They did not wish to register them before they were resurveyed into riverlots. The Government, while waiting to resurvey, wanted them to enter land claims for their occupied lands" [translation].[36]

Another source of conflict regarding the survey arose from the uncertainty of the Kàpeyakwàskonam (One Arrow) Reserve. According to the initial plan of the reserve, it encroached on several lots in Batoche, so that these lands were less than two miles deep. After lengthy negotiations this issue was resolved in November 1884. Only then did settlers of the "St. Laurent Survey" agree in principle to make entry for their lots. In the interval, other disputes or conflicting claims had developed in the area.

The issues of surveys and land entries were also discussed in petitions in 1884. In June, a petition signed by Charles Nolin and Maxime Lépine was sent to Ottawa through the intermediary of Bishop Grandin. The petitioners deplored the fact that the government was ignoring request after request about their land rights. One of the last petitions was that of Louis Riel and William Henry Jackson (dit Honoré Joseph Jaxon) dated 16 December 1884 and addressed to the Honorable J.A. Chapleau.[37] It stated that early colonists who were settled on odd-numbered sections or on those reserved for Hudson's Bay Company stood to lose everything.

Other points about pre-emption costs, requirements for residency and cultivation of the homestead or land claimed were also a source of great anxiety.

Resistance to Registration of Lands as Homesteads under the Dominion Lands Act

The Métis opposition to the surveying system and the refusal of many to make declarations in 1884 stemmed essentially from their firm conviction that they could not trust the government. Any conciliatory gesture was suspect. The Métis feared that giving in would be interpreted as a weakness, and that by being conciliatory, they would lose everything. Superintendent William Pearce, who had observed reticence on their part, gave a rather racist explanation for it. According to him, the refusal of the Métis to comply with requirements of the official surveying system was due to their primitive landholding customs, their ignorance, and their intrinsically malicious nature. In an official report in 1886[38] and more explicitly in his memoirs, he said:

> *It is difficult for many to understand why they would not avail themselves of entry, but no more illogical than many of their actions. Many parties had in settling along the river, ignored the regular surveys and squatted regardless of the sections being odd or even-numbered .... An excitable, uneducated people like the majority of the French Halfbreeds of the Canadian North-West naturally concluded that a similar action would prove a bonanza to them. There was a conspiracy ... not to make entry ... if refused, Government would issue patent without an entry fee being paid.*[39]

Pearce continued to support the validity of the township survey system and the government policy and to attribute the opposition of the Métis to a kind of conspiracy on their part to circumvent authority. The figures and examples he gave in an official report to this effect in 1885 reflected his narrow perspective.[40] He did not appreciate nor understand the Métis way of thinking and their concept of traditional land use.

The applications of 1884 had been sent to Ottawa, and on 4 February 1885, the commissioner in Winnipeg told the agent in Prince Albert to inform applicants that they could enter their lands. The notices were sent between 26 February and 7 March, but it is important to note that no one came forward before the armed resistance (26 March). Many Métis thought they could not obtain the land they had requested in their 1884 declarations. Claimants outside the "St. Laurent Settlement Survey" were being pressured to abandon claims in odd-numbered sections and conform to the township survey by entering their lands in legal subdivisions. Furthermore, the claims at St-Louis-de-Langevin had not been included in the investigation by agent Duck in 1884.[41]

The Métis were tired of unfulfilled promises and delays. According to an account by Father Fourmond in December 1884, "each time, the Ministers made promises, sometimes even in writing, but nothing was done, to the great displeasure of the Métis" [translation].[42] Although the reasons for resorting to arms probably to not stem only from difficulties regarding their land, there is little doubt that in the minds of most Métis, the government in March 1885 was still far from accepting their claims. According to another account of the events of 1885 by Philippe Garnot, one of the secretaries of the "petit provisoire" (the provisional government of Saskatchewan).

> *... it is easy to see by that that they were further away from making the arrangements than ever ... it was something that was feared more than anything else: it was the promises, because for fifteen years, they had received nothing but promises and not a single one of them was ever kept.*[43] [Translation]

Government responses also indicated no clear perception of the distinction between aboriginal rights and homestead claims. To the Métis, their lands were a native right which should not be related to homestead regulations applied to Eurocanadian settlers in the North-West. In fact, at first, the government did not even recognize the principle of Métis aboriginal land rights.

> ... These people can found no claim upon being Halfbreeds *[emphasis mine]. It is only as settlers that any indulgence can be shown them .... Anybody who goes to the Saskatchewan to settle, has just as much right to go there and enter on unoccupied land as those who went before them.*[44]

The Métis of the South Saskatchewan River attempted to convince the government of their right to use the land in accordance with their customs and to their right as first occupants through petitions between 1878 and 1884. More specifically, at a meeting held in Prince albert in 1881, the Métis and halfbreeds stressed their aboriginal rights, saying they should not be bound to the same requirements as an immigrant or homesteader.[45] They also tried to gain recognition for their custom of hay and woodlots, a right not specified in the Dominion Lands Act. The principle of the free lands or a direct native grant gained some support at the Territorial level, but the federal Department of the Interior and the Dominion Lands Branch, in particular the policies and views of A.M. Burgess and William Pearce, were negative and uncompromising. This question remained unresolved in the North-West Territories on the eve of the uprising. A note on the subject from Lieutenant-Governor Edgar Dewdney to Sir J.A. Macdonald in February 1885 suggests that the government intended to do something, but that the measure was only a preliminary phase in a long-term assessment of the claims of "some Métis."

> *I have the following telegram from Sir David Macpherson. 'Government has decided to investigate claims of the Halfbreeds and with that view has directed enumeration of those who did not participate in the grant under the Manitoba Act.' No representations received lately.*[46]

Dewdney added that he did not dare to forward the notice (to Macdowall) as it stood, fearing to provoke the Métis.

> *On receipt of the above I wired Macdowall as follows: 'Government has decided to investigate claims of the Half Breeds and with the view has already taken the preliminary steps. I feared to send the Telegram as worded by Sir David as it would, at this season when they have nothing else to do, seem to the bulk of the French Half Breeds who are making demands that they have nothing to expect. They would at once work on the English Half Breeds to help them, start a popular agitation which could make it more difficult to carry out the views of the Government than if the announcement is made later on. You will gather from my letter of yesterday that I would like any action in regard to the Half Breeds to be taken in the spring when they would be*

> *occupied with their own business and they would not be so likely to interfere with our Indians.'*[47]

In retrospect it would appear that Métis suspicions and interpretations of the government's policy regarding surveys and land claims were well-founded. If nothing else, armed resistance will have forced the government to take this question seriously and act.

RESURVEYS AND HOMESTEAD ENTRIES BETWEEN 1885 AND CA. 1925

In 1888, the farms of townships 42, 43, 44 and 45 were resurveyed (see Fig. 45).[48] This conciliatory gesture on the part of the government appeased a large part of the population. Leclerc, the surveyor, was sympathetic and hired local assistants. At Batoche, more specifically, the land along the west bank (beginning with sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 15, 19 and 30 of township 43-1-3 and sections 20, 21, 28, 32 and 33 of township 42-1-3 as far as Gabriel's Crossing) was divided into lots eight to 10 chains wide and generally one mile deep.[49] These lands were not all occupied at the time, especially those south of the village of Batoche. However, the resurvey now made it possible for many sons of families who were already settled there to take neighbouring lands. The surveyor Leclerc described the situation in this manner:

> *I have the honour of submitting to you, in accordance with my instructions, a report for the subdivision into riverlots requested by the Métis of Saskatchewan to which you agreed. I thank you on their behalf for granting them this survey, which they desired with great pleasure. [They] express their gratitude toward our governments. I found the entire Métis population well-disposed towards the government with a few exceptions, although uneasiness continues to prevail in some families. I concluded the work on the site after learning of all complaints.*[50] [Translation]

The following year (1889), other complaints were addressed to the Surveyor General. The survey work of the previous year, done in winter, was already in the process of being destroyed. The surveyors had not erected mounds, and the wooden posts had disappeared with the spring floods. The Métis were now asking for new iron posts to demarcate boundaries under dispute. These requests were not favourably received. In 1891, the surveyor Reid erected new posts here and there in the district when he surveyed the trail between Fish Creek and McKenzie's Crossing (St. Louis). However, the survey lines and posts remained a source of continual difficulty in the area .... In 1893, Inspector Wilson, in charge of teams at Batoche and Duck Lake, stated "that he has had a thorough search made for survey posts in the vicinity of Batoche. There is not a post or mound to be found except the iron posts on the surveyed trail, which had no marks."[51] In 1898, Mr. Reid was told to renew the posts, but he found no trace of the first ones. He nevertheless proceeded to mark some boundaries, and in many instances encroached on private property, which earned him the admonishment of his superiors.[52] These posts were removed, and it was not until 1908 that the original survey lines were retraced and corrected and iron posts erected.[53]

After the resurveys, the Métis were more favourably inclined to make formal land entries. Problems such as distance to the land office in Prince Albert, language barriers and the inability to pay the $10 entry fee discouraged or delayed some.

An analysis of 253 homestead declarations (the "special" applications in 1884 and the formal entries or homesteads from 1885 and ca. 1925 [see Appendix A]) reveals that contrary to widely held opinion, the Métis wanted their lands. The individuals who made entry persisted although the interval between entry and patent generally exceeded the three-year term stipulated in the Dominion Lands Act. Similarly, the Métis usually resided on their claim or occupied it "unofficially" for some years before making entry. In the St. Louis, St. Laurent, Batoche and Vandal area which was studied, there was no important difference between Métis and non-Métis (mainly French and French-Canadians) in terms of age at time of entry, absenteeism, improvements and persistence, at least not until the period of the First World War. Certain other trends can also be gleaned from the statistical analysis. Once the Métis resolved to make entry, they persisted until patent, but the interval between the two dates depended on what they intended to use the land for: if they intended to sell, they were more eager to apply for entry and patent. Moïse Ouellette at St. Laurent, applied for patent for one of his lots as he lay near death in 1911, the same year as his official entry but 38 years after establishing residence.[54]

Another important feature of Métis land entries was absenteeism and their activities when not on the homestead. Although there was probably a tendency by all claimants (Métis and non-Métis) to minimize absenteeism to authorities, half of those who responded to this question in 1884, were absent one to two months a year and the other half three to four months a year. This response was not surprising in a transitional period from a primarily hunting and freighting to a more agricultural economy. Little absenteeism was reported in post-1884 declarations, but it is known from other sources that most Métis pursued other occupations for essential supplementary income.

The 1884 declarations were those taken by the local Prince Albert Lands Branch office in a special survey by agent Duck who tried to have all Métis who had "settled" or claimed lands along the South Saskatchewan River to participate. As previously mentioned, no declarations were taken in the St. Louis district, especially not in the township where many residents refused to enter their lands as legal subdivisions or were intimidated by rumours of claims by the Prince Albert Colonization Company. A number of unconvinced or absent claimants also refused to make declarations at St. Laurent and Batoche, while a number of Métis who had settled in the area of Gabriel's Crossing declared their lands in legal subdivisions. The 61 included in the sample of 1884 declarations used for our study do not include the 10 originating in the Fish Creek area (specifically Tourond coulee) who were not established directly along the river. The second series of applications was made up of those filing after 1884, a total 192 (see Appendix A). In both cases, only the recorded entrants or persons who made official entry were used in the analysis. Unlike the 1884 declarations the post-1884 ones provided some insight into the number of previous occupants (usually unofficial):

Table 7. Total Non-Persistent Occupants per Lot. Post-1884 Métis Declarations. (Appendix A: Codes 3, 4, 5, 6)

Previous Occupants	No. of Lots	%
0	60	45.5
1	49	37.1
2	16	12.1
3	5	3.8
4	1	0.8
5	1	0.8
TOTAL	132	100.0

Missing Cases: 25

Table 7 reveals that of those who were queried about the number of previous occupants, mainly pre-1900 applications, 45.5 percent said there were none and 54.6 percent that they were not the first occupants. The number of previous occupants may have been withheld by some Métis who believed it was more prudent to be circumspect. Otherwise some improvements might not be accepted by the agent or one of the previous occupants might later try to make entry.

In order to fully understand the Métis response to land entries and patents under the Dominion Lands Act, we must have some idea of the general principles and regulations governing the act.[55] The Métis were not granted any special provisions under this legislation. More specifically, their native claims were to be dealt with by scrip or some other special grant and not with homesteads (see section further on: "Native Land Claims through Scrip in 1886 and 1899-1900"). As early claimants, some would meet less stringent regulations than later settlers, but the same duties were applied to both Métis and immigrant settlers. The object of the Dominion Lands Act, as set forth and administered by the federal Department of the Interior between 1870 and 1930, was to promote European immigration and settlement of the Canadian West. The regulations changed frequently in the early years, and a corrupt and inefficient bureaucratic web entangled Métis and Eurocanadian settler alike.

Homestead entry for one quarter-section or 160 acres was obtained by an adult male upon payment of $10 fee. Until 1884, the residence requirement was six months out of every year for three years. For a short time afterwards, residence was waived except for three months preceding application for patent while the expense of entry could be replaced by cultivation, buildings or stock. This system led to abuses and the three-year term was reinstated. Similarly until 1889, the required acreage broken was 15 acres; this was increased to 30 by the 1890s and 50 in 1922. There were exceptions where land was scrubby and hard to break, a condition which applied to the Métis who were living along the west bank at Batoche and St. Laurent. Upon fulfillment of the residency and cultivation requirements, the homesteader presented himself at the Dominion Lands office to make an application for patent. The sworn statement, corroborated by two witnesses, was verified by the local agent. Upon approval, a patent certificate was delivered to the homesteader and the land was registered at the Dominion Lands office. In 1874, the right of pre-emption (or purchase of adjoining 160 acres) was introduced. The original fee of $1 per acre was raised to $2.50 in the 1880s. Pre-emptions were abolished in 1890, but those who had settled before 1881 retained this right. Few Métis, however, could afford to purchase the pre-emptions applied for in 1884. Amendments to the Dominion Lands Act in 1883 provided for a second "free" homestead entry. This privilege was likewise abolished in 1886 but retained for an "old settler" who had made a first entry before 1889. He could obtain a second one after completing the three-year term on the first. Barthélémi Pilon, Xavier Letendre, Antoine Richard, William Boyer and Baptiste Boucher Sr. were among the 16 or so in the district who availed themselves of this privilege.[56] The right to pre-emptions and purchased homesteads without conditions at $3.50 per acre were revived for all in 1908. Lands in odd-numbered sections which had initially been reserved for the railway were also opened for sale by the government at $3 per acre. Although the latter did not affect the Métis who claimed riverlots, other policies did.

The riverlots almost always exceeded the grant of 160 acres. From a sample of 188 cases where lots sizes were recorded, only 25 (21.2 percent) were the standard 160 acres, others ranged from 95 to 203 acres. According to homestead regulations, the settler had to pay for any land in excess. If he had settled before 1880 the cost was $1 an acre, before 1889 $2 an acre and after that date $3 an acre. The government's unofficial policy during the 1890s and early 1900s was to apply pressure on the occupants of riverlots to pay for these parcels of extra land. In the meantime, title on the 160 acre homestead was withheld. According to accounts in government files,[57] most of the Métis did not want to break up their lands and undertook to purchase any land in excess of 160 acres. When they were unable to pay and interest accumulated, they were finally threatened with losing their land. Only upon proof of extreme poverty or being first settlers would the Department consider granting a property title or patent, and then only for the 160 acres. There is no doubt that this situation contributed to delays in the issuing of patent. The case of Jean Caron Sr. of Batoche is a good example. Caron occupied lot 52 in 1881. When he applied for patent to his land in 1888, he was informed that he must first purchase the excess 23 acres at $3 per acre (in fact, Caron should only have had to pay $2). He was confused and somewhat shocked and as a result, put the matter aside for the time being. He did not receive a further notice from the government on the matter. Finally in 1903, when Caron was 70 years old and it became obvious that he either would not or could not pay and in consideration of his status as an early settler, he received title to the westerly 160 acres of lot 52.[58] Other *bona fide* settlers, such as Jean-Baptiste Boyer on lot 6 of the St. Laurent Settlement and Emmanuel Champagne on lot 44 at Batoche, encountered similar difficulties.

There were other problems particular to the Métis. They had chosen their lands for hay and woodlots as well as proximity to water, and not for cultivation purposes. There were good agricultural lands at St. Louis and Batoche, but the importance of being near family and community discouraged many from settling in adjoining townships, at least initially. Another problem, in contrast with the Eurocanadian settler generally, was the resentment of the Métis towards the government. Although difficult to establish specifically, this attitude is illustrated by the concealment of information and by delays in complying with regulations. Other practices such as the custom of moving from one unoccupied lot to another or cultivating it confused and angered the land agents.

Amidst these difficulties and maze of regulations which many failed to understand, the Métis who settled in the South Saskatchewan district were persistent in establishing their claims. Tables 8-12 illustrate this fact and other features of Métis land settlement.

Table 8. Years Between Residence and Entry Application by Métis as per 1884 and Post-1884 Declarations. (Appendix A: Codes 1, 2, 3, 4)

	1884 Patent		Post '84 Patent			
Years	**Obtained**	**No**	**Obtained**	**No**	**Total**	**%**
0-3	24	10	43	2	79	52.0
4-6	6	7	18	2	33	21.7
7-9	3	3	3	1	33	6.6
10-12	4	3	5	0	12	7.9
13-15	0	0	6	0	6	3.9
16-18	0	0	4	0	4	2.6
19-21	0	0	2	0	2	1.3
22-24	0	0	3	0	3	2.0
25-27	0	0	1	0	1	0.7
28-30	0	0	0	0	0	0
31-33	0	0	0	0	0	0
34-36	0	0	1	0	1	0.7
37-39	0	0	1	0	1	0.7
TOTAL	37	23	87	5	152	100.0

Missing cases: 11

According to Table 8, 67 declarations entered (24 entries in 1884 and 43 in the post-1884 period) by those who persisted until patent, made entry within three years or less of establishing residence. For the post-1884 successful applicants, the interval between residence and entry extended up to 39 years although only 30 percent took more than six years to make official entry. In all, 124 Métis (approximately 81 percent of all Métis who made entry) obtained patent to the land. The interval between land occupation and entry was characteristic of their response to land registration.

For the non-Métis, the pattern is markedly different. Out of a sample of 28 for 1884 and post-1884 declarations, 24 (85.7 percent) were on the land three years or less before making entry.

The cross-tabulation of successful post-1884 Métis applicants with the year of application for entry revealed some interesting data on Métis settlement periods (see Table 9). Entries were most numerous in the periods 1885-90 and 1899-1914. The number of Métis answering was 96, of whom 64 (67 percent) registered between 1899-1914.

For the period 1885-86 (Tables 8 and 9 and Appendix A) there were 37 entrants from 1884 and 11 from post-1884 who persisted for a total of 48 for the two declaration types. Those who didn't persevere numbered 23 in 1884 and three in post-1884 for a total of 26. The rate of non-persistence was relatively high during that period, 26 (35.1 percent) out of 74. Perhaps more important were the number of entries in the post-1899 period, which coincided with the second generation Métis settlement. This period witnessed the entry of unsettled lands on the west side of the river at Batoche and north of the "St. Laurent Settlement Survey." It is possible, however, that the numbers also reflect the planned exodus of some Métis, as witnessed at Fish Creek at the turn of the century. It was customary to quickly apply for entry and apply for title just when a sale or move was likely.

Table 9. Year of Entry Application by Ethnic Background for Post-1884 Applicants who Later Obtained Patent. (Appendix A: Code 4)

	1883-86	1887-90	1891-94	1895-98	1899-1902	1903-06	1907-10	1911-14	1915-18	1919-22	1923-26	Total
Métis	11	9	2	5	16	27	11	10	1	3	1	96
Non-Métis	2	0	1	2	6	6	8	4	0	1	0	30
TOTAL	13	9	3	7	22	33	19	14	1	4	1	126

Missing Cases: 2 Métis

Table 10. Year of Application for Patent by Ethnic Background for Post-1884. (Appendix A: Code 4)

	1875-86	1887-90	1891-94	1895-98	1899-1902	1903-06	1907-10	1911-14	1915-18	1919-22	1923-26	Total
Métis	6	9	4	4	3	21	15	17	8	7	4	98
Non-Métis	1	0	0	1	2	4	5	7	5	3	1	29
TOTAL	7	9	4	5	5	25	20	24	13	10	5	127

Missing Cases: 1 non-Métis

The year of entry and application for patent can also be linked to ethnic background (see Tables 9 and 10). Although the sampling of Métis (96 and 98) was much larger than of non-Métis (30 and 29), the results suggest that the period of entry and patent was generally the same for both groups. More important, however, out of a total of 96 Métis who made entry between 1883 and 1926, 54 did so between 1899 and 1910. The same number (actually 53) who applied for patent during the subsequent three-year periods (1903-14), suggests that the 1900-14 period was one of the most persistent and successful in terms of Métis official land entry and application for patent.

The number of years between residence and patent for all post-1884 applicants (Table 11) reveal that 65 percent of the Métis applied for patent within 15 years of establishing residence. By that time, however, 94 percent of the non-Métis had already obtained patent. Many Métis resided on the land for some time before making entry and applying for patent.

Delays in applying for patent varied between three years or less aned 39 years. According to Table 12, 83 percent of the Métis obtained patent within 12 years of entry while 94 percent of the non-Métis had obtained patent by that time. More significant, however, was the fact that two Métis were taking up to 39 years while only two non-Métis took more than 13 years.

Table 11. Number of Years Between Residence and Patent for Post-1884 Records. (Appendix A: Codes 4 and 5)

Years	Métis	%	Non-Métis	%
0-3	5	4	3	10
4-6	31	23	11	36
7-9	18	13	11	36
10-12	17	13	3	10
13-15	16	12	1	2
Total	**87**	**65**	**29**	**94**
16-18	7	5	0	0
19-21	7	5	2	6
22-24	11	8	0	0
25-27	4	3	0	0
28-30	10	8	0	0
31-33	3	2	0	0
34-36	2	1	0	0
37-39	1	1	0	0
40-42	2	1	0	0
43-45	0	0	0	0
46-48	2	1	0	0
TOTAL	136	100	31	100

Missing Cases: 1 non-Métis

Table 12. Year Interval Between Formal Entry and Patent.

Years	Métis	%	Non-Métis	%
0-3	44	32.8	5	15.6
4-12	67	50.0	25	78.1
Total	**111**	**82.8**	**30**	**93.7**
13-21	20	15.0	2	6.3
25-39	3	2.2	–	–
TOTAL	134	100.0	32	100.0

Missing Cases: 2 Métis

Absenteesim or the comings and goings of the Métis when they were not on their land was of particular concern to the land agent. To the Métis, it was a necessary by-product of their mixed economy. It is important to note in Table 13, however, that in response to the absentee question almost half of the Métis (45.4 percent) queried and just over half of the non-Métis (52.8 percent) replied that they were not absent. There was no significant difference, then, between the two groups.

Table 13. Reasons for Absence from Homestead (Appendix A: Codes 1 to 6)

	Métis				Non-Métis	
	1884	Post 1884	Total	%	Post 1884	%
Present	5	93	98	45.4	19	52.8
Absent						
With friends/ family	7	16	23	10.6	3	8.3
Working elsewhere	40	26	66	3.6	8	22.2
Living on another homestead	1	12	13	6.0	4	11.1
Squatted elsewhere	0	1	1	0.5	–	–
Other reasons	0	8	8	3.7	2	5.6
No Reply	7	0	7	3.2	–	–
TOTAL	60	156	216	100.0	36	100.0

Missing cases: 1 Métis

Only 20 (7.9 percent) of all land declarations and entries were made by women. Single women were not eligible for homestead entry. A widow with minor children could obtain entry and title, but only as a legal representative of her deceased husband. Otherwise she would have to be legally designated as an heir. Examples of widowed women who obtained entry and patent as legal representatives in the South Saskatchewan River district were Hélène Racette, Marie-Rose Ferguson, Josephte Tourond, Marguerite Ouellette and Véronique Parenteau. Emmanuel Champagne designated his wife Marie Letendre as heir to lot 44 at Batoche whereas Marguerite Caron, widow of Jean Sr., obtained entry and patent for a second homestead, lot 52, at Vandal.

In addition to adherence to inflexible government regulations, other problems beset the Métis who wanted to obtain ownership of their land. Indigency forced many to take out seed grain advances in 1886 and subsequent years. As a result they mortgaged their farms. Title to the land was withheld until the liens were discharged. A settler who was able to reimburse the government within a year or deliver the equivalent in oats, wheat or barley was relieved of his dept with a small (six percent in 1886) interest fee. Otherwise the debtor had to pay double the amount due plus yearly interest. Although the initial lien was usually small, it was rarely paid within a year. Crops were generally poor in the 1880s and 1890s, and cash flow was limited. Interest on the loans accrued, and many Métis still had 1886 liens registered against their lands in the 1920s. This situation explains at least in part the delays in obtaining patent. Among those seriously affected were Jean Caron Sr. (lot 52, Batoche), Frédéric St-Germain (lot 2, Vandal), Abraham Bélanger Jr. (lot 48, Vandal), François Arcand (lot 12, St. Laurent) and Mrs. Célestine Régnier (lot 8, St. Louis).[59] Daniel Gariépy and Elie Dumont lost their lands through these liens, and the descendants of Pierre Parenteau Sr. and Jean-Baptiste Gervais did not manage to obtain title to their properties until 1926 and 1930 respectively.[60] The outstanding seed grain mortgage liens were finally discharged by the Grain Adjustment Board in 1932, the main reason being that many lands had been transferred and the present occupant was not directly accountable for the debt.

Many other factors contributed to the exodus of the Métis, a phenomenon which accelerated after 1915 and reached its peak during the Depression of the 1930s. The arrival of immigrants of other nationalities at the turn of the century tended to drive away the Métis. The dispersal was not as massive as in the Qu'Appelle Valley, but it was clearly evident at Fish Creek and to a lesser degree at St-Laurent-de-Grandin. In some cases the elders died and the children who had long since left the district sold the land. On the other hand, there was a regrouping of families, particularly at Batoche and St. Louis, which ensured Métis permance in the region. Undesirable features such as marshy and sandy lands, particularly along the west bank of the South Saskatchewan River, forced off both the second generation of Métis as well as the French and Belgian immigrant settlers who attempted to cultivate it.

Reserved lands under the Dominion Lands Act also caused some confusion and disturbed some claims in the Batoche area. As part of the agreement of sale of its land claims to the Dominion of Canada in 1869, the Hudson's Bay Company was granted 1/20 of the land in the fertile belt of the North-West. In each township, section 8 and three-quarters of section 26 (all of the section in every fifth township) were reserved by the Company. According to an 1884 regulation, this reserved area included approximately 400 acres in section 7 and 8 (T43-1-3) on the west side of the river at Batoche. The area corresponded roughly to riverlots 14, 15 and 16 originally surveyed according to the township system of 1878-79 and resurveyed into riverlots in 1888. The area corresponding to lot 16 had been claimed by Elzéar Parisien since 1873 and occupied by him until ca. 1885, while lots 14 and 15 were occupied by Thomas Lépine and

Athanase Falcon between 1882 and 1885.[61] There is evidence that insecurity regarding these claims influenced their departure. But the conflict only came to a head when Alexandre Pierre Fisher, owner of the NW quarter of section 18 to the north, claimed lot 16 which he had purchased from Parisien around 1885. Fisher, who had settled around 1877, had obtained title to his first homestead in 1888. He was entitled to a second homestead and wished to enter lot 16 located in the immediate vicinity of his farm. On the basis of his early settlement and probably to placate an outspoken local opposition (Rouge) leader, the government negotiated an agreement with the Hudson's Bay Company in 1891 by which it gave up lots 14, 15 and 16 in exchange for riverlots 9 to 13 which were unoccupied.[62] Fisher won his case after three years of negotiations and was granted the lot, but because of bitterness or disillusionment, he never registered his claim.

There were some isolated efforts by land agents and homestead inspectors to assist the Métis in obtaining entry and patent to their lands. By the turn of the century, more Métis and local French-speaking settlers were employed as sub-agents at Duck Lake and Rosthern. Nevertheless, financial difficulties such as back taxes resulted in the loss of lands. Many lots at Batoche and St. Laurent reverted back to the Municipality of St. Louis in the 1920s. Some of these difficulties were not particular to the Métis. Eurocanadian settlers experienced similar trials during this period. It would appear, however, that the Métis as a group, particularly the poorer, less-educated farmer group, had more than their share of bad luck. There is evidence of lack of understanding of fee schedules, residence requirements and improvement duties. An 1890 letter by Abraham Bélanger Jr. to assistant agent Louis Schmidt, from his "hivernement" at Grosse-Butte (near Humboldt), in 1890 suggests he wished to settle outstanding debts on lot 48 (T42-1-3) at Fish Creek, but that he was waiting for the government to bill him.[63] The more travelled, business-experienced merchant Salomon Venne was also confused. When he applied for entry for lot 55 in 1884 and again in 1886, he believed patent would be delivered automatically as residence and improvement requirements had been met. It was only when he offered the land as collateral on a business transaction in 1890, that he came to realize that he had to make a formal application for patent.[64] He obtained legal counsel and the issue was resolved, but at some personal expense and humiliation. Inquiries and statements by Charles Nolin, Charles-Eugène Boucher and Louis Schmidt, who were familiar with Dominion Lands regulations and government bureaucracy, also reveal confusion and various interpretations of the regulations governing land entries and patent requirements.

Other local spokesmen, such as Philippe Garnot and Octave Régnier, were often requested to write inquiry letters for Métis seeking information or settlement of a dispute. It is possible that through personal interest or ignorance they misled their compatriots, but it is doubtful that this was deliberate as they also experienced personal difficulties and delays in settling their claims.

It would appear that gradually, by the 1890s, the Métis better understood or conformed to the homestead regulations. There is little doubt, however, that they remained convinced of the moral and constitutional precedence of their land customs and claims over regulations enacted by the Dominion Lands Branch for the benefit of Eurocanadian immigration and settlement.

NATIVE LAND CLAIMS THROUGH SCRIP IN 1886 AND 1899-1900

The government attempted to extinguish the native or aboriginal land rights of the Métis in the North-West Territories through the issue of scrip. The Manitoba precedent served as a model and as a result similar problems and delays in administering the grant fostered dissatisfaction amongst the Métis. It has been suggested that the delays drove down the price to that which speculators were willing to pay and induced more Métis than might otherwise have done so to part with their claims to speculators for cash rather than wait for their land.[65] The failure of section 31 of the Manitoba Act to assist the Métis delayed the enactment of a similar grant in the North-West Territories. It was only in 1879, after several requests by the Métis and their spokesmen, that the government acknowledged the native rights of the Métis outside Manitoba.[66] This principle was reiterated in 1883.

Initially, the federal government considered granting the Métis non-negotiable non-transferable (up to the third generation) scrip. Bishops Taché and Grandin and most of the clergy favoured the establishment of Métis "reserves" that would control the disposition of the lands. They argued that the Métis were unable to resist the enticements held out by the speculators and that their adaptation to the sedentary way of life depended on the success of a "block system" of settlement.[67] It was a paternalistic view and one which most Métis adamantly opposed. But it stemmed from some genuine consideration for the Métis and fear regarding French-speaking and Catholic settlement in Manitoba and the North-West. They perceived the Métis as the nucleus of this settlement.

Bishop Taché, in particular, had been deeply involved in the disposition of Métis lands in Manitoba. He personally purchased many lands as well as some scrip through representations, actions which he defended on the basis of wanting to impede the dispossession of Métis lands to Protestant Ontarians or "strangers." He reiterated his deception and fears regarding scrip in a letter to Riel in late 1884.[68]

The Métis of the South Saskatchewan district had begun petitioning the federal and territorial governments for native land grants in 1874. Some of them were "western" Métis, not eligible for the Manitoba grant. Other had left the Red River Settlement in the 1850s and 1860s. The question of "free land" was raised by the Métis of Batoche and district in at least six petitions between 1878 and 1885. In particular, the request by Gabriel Dumont and Alex Fisher in 1878 asking that land be granted to heads of families and children who had not participated in the Manitoba allotment.[69] Dumont and Fisher, however, were strongly opposed to the idea of Métis reserves. A group of Métis from the Cypress Hills area spoke out in favour of a reserve or "block" settlement in a petition to the Territorial Council. The latter recommended to the federal government, however, that it grant a non-transferable land scrip of 160 acres to each family head and his children (when they each reached 18) and to residents of the Territories in 1870, with the stipulation that the land would remain the property of the Crown for 10 years.[70]

When the federal government finally decided upon the issue of scrip in early 1885, it was guided by expediency rather than the long-term interests of the Métis. The policy was not a negotiated agreement but enacted through legislation and order-in-council. The National Policy and the Department of the Interior were the main agents of the North-West Scrip Commissions.[71] The order-in-council of 28 January 1885 only authorized the appointment of three commissioners who would ascertain the number of Métis able to participate in the Métis land grant, based on their residence in Manitoba or in the North-West Territories as of 1870.[72] A subsequent order-in-council (adopted 30 March 1885 in the wake of the armed resistance), authorized the commissioners to proceed not only with the enumeration of eligible Métis but also to set aside land for the distribution of scrip.[73]

According to the amended resolutions, every head of family residing in the North-West Territories or outside Manitoba on or before 15 July 1870 would be eligible to receive a homestead grant of 160 acres. If he did not already occupy any land, he would receive a scrip valued at $160 which could be exchanged for land (or a number of acres of land) of equivalent value.[74] The children of these heads of families living in the Territories on 15 July 1870 would be entitled to 240 acres of land and, if they were not settled on any land, to scrip of $240 which they could exchange for land of equivalent value.[75] The commissioners soon realized, however, that the two issues of land grant under the Homestead Act and scrip allotment on the basis of native claims had been confused. Provisions were made to distribute scrip as a distinct grant.

The 1885 Street Commission visited the Fort Qu'Appelle district in the midst of the armed resistance. It would appear, according to accounts from that era, that deprivation and intimidation guided the Métis to cash in their scrip for easy money or to quickly dispose of their land scrip. According to M.P. D.H. Macdowall:

> *... The Half-breed population was in a considerably disturbed state of mind .... Some of their friends were killed, some expatriated, others ... they knew not where — so they took the scrip as it was given, and only afterwards, when they had time to consider, concluded that they had not received their due and that their birth-right was sold for a mess of potage.*[76]

The ministerial order of 18 April 1885, made amendments to the issuance of scrip. Métis children would receive a certificate worth 240 acres. However, they preferred scrip for $240, and an amendment to the Act on 13 April 1886 enabled them to choose between scrip for 240 acres and scrip for $240. The order of March 1885 granting the heads of families scrip for $160 exchangeable for land was still in effect but most chose money scrip.[77]

Commissioner Roger Goulet visited St-Laurent-de-Grandin, to dispose of the claims in the South Saskatchewan River district, in the fall of 1886.[78] Some of the claims were also heard at Prince Albert. There were various types of claims — as heads of families, children of heads of families (born as of 15 July 1870), and heirs of deceased heads of families and children. Twelve or so claims had been settled at Batoche in June 1885, almost all by women who were elderly, widowed or heirs.[79] A few additional claims were also heard at St. Laurent in 1887.

On the basis of a list of scrip issued at those centres between 1885 and 1887 (see list, Appendix G), no land scrip was claimed but then most of the Métis in that area were already settled on lands for which they could obtain homestead patent. The majority of the South Saskatchewan Métis were from Manitoba, had already claimed scrip under the Manitoba grant or were not eligible for scrip under the provisions of North-West Territories grant of 1885. There were also some, particularly the men, who, fearing prosecution or reprisals as a result of the armed resistance, chose not to come forth.

Testimonies about the immediate cashing-in of scrip suggest that the existing economic conditions following the hostilities were the determining factors. According to Father Fourmond:

> *They came from everywhere for eight days to receive these precious rights. They totalled roughly 16,000 dollars ... just for the district of St. Laurent .... This scrip, almost all of which was immediately sold, relieved many a misery without enriching anyone, except perhaps the buyers. Many of our poor people had already promised them to merchants in order to obtain staples and clothing ... I was happy to see the joy of these poor people and to think that this providential help would relief them of much misery and hardship this winter.*[80] [Translation]

There were other factors. In a report to the Department of the Interior in 1890, D.H. Macdowall stated that the Métis generally opted for money scrip because it was negotiable at face value. He added that it was difficult for the Métis to opt for land. An acre of land cost at least $2 per acre; in other words, the recipient of scrip could purchase only 80 or 120 acres, not 160 or 240.[81] He would also have to choose a lot immediately, which did not give him the best choice nor the possibility of choosing land elsewhere. "Had this not been done every Half-breed would have taken land scrip as being more valuable and at the same time they would not have sold all their scrip, as part of the scrip only which each family got would have relieved their indebtedness."[82] There was also evidence that the majority of Métis did not understand the long-term advantages of land scrip. They perceived scrip as a means to ready cash, not as an investment. Some also confused scrip and land entries (homesteads) under the Dominion Lands Act. Titles for both were distributed at the same office. Finally, the 1885-86 issue around Batoche involved a proportionately large number of older women, younger men and claims by virtue of inheritance, circumstances favouring a quick cash settlement.

In 1886, the Métis of Batoche and St. Laurent presented two petitions to the government in which they raised some of the irregularities and problems regarding scrip. The first asked that those who had taken up arms not be excluded[83] while the second deplored that Métis with no fixed residence had not been able to obtain scrip.[84] The second group of petitioners, under the presidency of John Ross, appealed to a principle which became an important precedent until the turn of the century. It asked the government to grant scrip "to the children of parents married in 1870, so that there is no jealousy between the children of a single family" [translation].[85] Another resolution demanded that the scrip registered in Manitoba for people now in the North-West be granted in the North-West.[86] The extension of the right to scrip was reiterated in two other petitions in 1888. That of Fisher, Garnot and others requested that scrip "be granted to all children in the interval, that is between 1870 and 1885 ... that way, the settlers of the North-West would be treated in the same manner as those of Manitoba" [translation].[87] Xavier Letendre, Charles Nolin and other local Conservatives supported their opponents on this issue. "We insist that the rights of Métis children be granted until at least 1885 with the same privileges as those granted to the Métis children of Manitoba in 1870" [translation].[88]

The issue gained political momentum in the 1890s. The government asked the North-West Mounted Police to observe the reaction of the Métis. In a letter to his superior regarding the investigations of Sergeant Mountain in the Prince Albert district in 1889, Superintendent Perry reported: "The French Half-breeds are confidently expecting that the present Parliament will give them Scrip till 1885 and there is a feeling amongst them that Government has promised them."[89] That same year, A.M. Burgess, the assistant deputy minister of the Department of the Interior, visited the St. Laurent district in order to observe the situation in person as the question was much debated. On one hand, there was the clergy, who opposed issued money scrip. On the basis of the Manitoba and 1885 experience in the North-West, in which most of the Métis had lost or sold their scrip, the missionaries suggested establishing a Métis reserve instead. Meetings on this subject were held in 1890 at Duck Lake, Batoche and St. Laurent. At a meeting in Duck Lake, the Conservative MP, D.H. Macdowall, spoke in favour of a reserve. It was supported, at least in principle, by the population of St. Laurent, which formed a committee to examine the proposal. At a subsequent meeting in Batoche, at the beginning of 1891, however, there was strong opposition. According to an eyewitness, Father Fourmond:

> *The key speaker [Boucher] who intended to run for the legislative assembly of Regina, and wished to become popular began to rail against the colony, which he unjustly confused and without taking notice of the committee's work with the Métis reserves, accusing the supporters of the colony of wishing to treat the*

> *Métis as savages, adding that it was necessary to request scrip, nothing but scrip .... All but eight asked for scrip.*[90] [Translation]

This opposition by the young Conservatives of Batoche, Duck Lake and St. Louis put an end to the reserve scheme. The Liberals, who came to power in 1896, supported scrip without restrictions. In 1899, under the Laurier government, an order-in-council granted scrip to all children born between 15 July 1870 and the end of 1885.[91] A certificate worth $240 enabled the recipient to exchange it for land worth up to the equivalent value or to take 240 acres of land available for homesteading.[92] The conditions were very liberal. The issue included claims for children of deceased parents and the assignment of scrip of minor children to their parents. Shortly after a last petition from the Métis of Duck Lake and district in January 1900, the government also recognized the rights of children whose parents had received scrip in Manitoba and granted parents the land rights of children who had died between 1870 and 1885.[93] The Walker-Côté Commission, which dealt specifically with Métis claims (as opposed to non-treaty Indians), was established in March 1900. Most of the claims in the Batoche-St. Louis district were distributed between June and August. The Commission recognized powers of attorney or assignment with respect to money scrip while land scrip was non-transferable, a policy which favoured the selection of money scrip.

A tabulation of claims for the district suggests that most eligible claimants came forward. There were numerous assignments by women and minor children to fathers and husbands. Claims of deceased parents were usually shared by the surviving children while those of deceased children were usually claimed by the father or head of family. Although money scrip was more popular, there were a significant number of land scrip applications (see list, Appendix H). A glance at these names suggests a link between socio-economic circumstances and the selection of land scrip.[94] For example, Charles Pantaléon Schmidt, son of land agent Louis Schmidt, chose land scrip as did Baptiste Jr. and Tobie, sons of storekeeper Baptiste Boyer. John Letendre, son of Xavier, and his cousins Louis Jr., Modeste Parenteau, and Victor Thomas also chose land scrip. "Children" of other more prosperous families — Salomon Venne, Ambroise Fisher and Louis Marion — did the same. Others such as Baptiste and Moïse Ouellette Jr. and François Slater also chose land despite their financial difficulties. The selection of land scrip, however, did not preclude its disposition or sale. Most of these scrips were sold to real estate agents or other interests between 1901 and 1907.[95] The land scrip was generally located at some distance from the residence of the claimant, and unless he wished to relocate or had some knowledge of the agricultural value of the claim, it was sold.

The case of John (Jean-Baptiste) Letendre, son of Xavier Letendre, illustrates this point. He selected scrip for 240 acres and was awarded land (NE quarter and west half of NW quarter-section 6, T40-6-W3), located southeast of Rosthern, in a Mennonite settlement area. The claim was promptly assigned by Letendre to A.J. Adamson who secured patent in 1902. Letendre, who resided at Batoche, subsequently made entry and obtained patent for a homestead (SW quarter-section 16, T42-24-2) at Bonne Madone. He was evidently interested in acquiring land and he may have used his scrip income to establish himself at a more suitable location.

Land prices had risen since 1885, and the increase in immigration and the enlargement of farms pursued by Eurocanadian settlers made the selection and disposal of land scrip more financially attractive. Scrip buyers or speculators followed closely, as they had in 1885, and there is little doubt that some Duck Lake and Rosthern merchants made some profitable transactions. Many Métis were also indebted to these stores or businesses: Goodfellow Brothers and W. Tait of Prince Albert; I. & R. Friesen and D. Hoeppner of Rosthern; H. Mitchell, R.S. Mackenzie and J. McIntyre of Duck Lake; A. Marcelin of Aldina; the Corporation Épiscopale de la Saskatchewan; and a number of firms in Moose Jaw and Indian Head where the Métis had also located lands. The largest dealer in Métis land scrip in the area, however, was A.J. Adamson of Rosthern, who bought either for his firm (Canada Territories Corporation) or for the account of the Saskatchewan Valley Land Company.

Scrip was a complex and largely unregulated system by which the government proposed to dispose of Métis aboriginal claims in Western Canada. The intentions of the government were not only to dispose of these claims, but also to free the land for Eurocanadian settlement. Speculation was considered an honorable pursuit by Eurocanadian business in the late 19th century. Scrip was the ideal device for these ventures. The Métis, on the other hand, were in a period of social and economic transition and found themselves on the fringe of the economic and social mainstream of the era. They viewed scrip as a form of immediate compensation or relief, and not as a substitute for land. The Métis of the South Saskatchewan district had occupied farms since the early 1870s. They believed they could enter these lands and obtain title under the Homestead Act. Although the homestead was not the direct nor "free" grant demanded by the Métis, it was preferable to the circuitous land scrip alternative.

Certain aspects of the scrip policy, in particular powers of attorney, assignments and scrip accounts accumulated by the speculators in order to control the buying and selling, facilitated fraud and misrepresentation. Finally, the whole system, as conceived and carried out by the government, was unfair to the Métis. They had not been party to its design and were its victims, not beneficiaries as intended. Member of the Territorial Legislature, Charles "Le Marquis" Fisher, himself a Métis, exposed some of its abuses and felt the government had a moral responsibility towards his people.

> *I desire to draw your attention to a matter affecting the issue of Halfbreed Scrip which from my own personal knowledge is assuming most serious proportions in this district, with a strong hope that some steps will be taken by the Government to remedy the evil .... The Halfbreeds are being prevailed upon by agents or speculators to sell their interest in their own and that of their families scrip for a mere song; 240 acre scrips are being bought up for the paltry sum of $75.00 to $80.00, which is not only robbing the Half-breeds but is also a serious prospective blow to the district, as it affects the well-being of these people. I understand that one party has secured the hypothecation of at least seventy five claims in this immediate neighborhood, and I really trust the Government will see their way to protecting in some measure these poor misguided people from the hands of money sharks.*[96]

Notes

Land Claims in the South Saskatchewan River Area

1 René Fumoleau, *As Long As This Land Shall Last* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977), p. 17.

2 Treaties and land surrenders began in present-day Central Canada as early as 1764. That year the British at Forth Niagara purchased some land from the Saulteaux (Ojibwa). The reserve system had been established much earlier in the late 17th century. Huron village or reserves were set up between 1680 and 1750, and in 1786 a Micmac reserve was established in St. Margaret's Bay (Nova Scotia). For more information see E. Palmer Patterson II, *The Canadian Indian: A History since 1500* (Don Mills: Collier-Macmillan, 1972).

3 It is important to underline that the Amerindians were ready to share *their* lands with the newcomers but not to *give* them up as they were compelled to do. Moreover, they didn't consider the treaties as permanent and immutable agreements but as something to be negotiated in the future. See John L. Tobias, "The Origins of the Treaty Rights Movement in Saskatchewan," in F.L. Barron and J.B. Waldram, eds., *Native Society in Transition* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1986), p. 241.

4 Alexander Morris, *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians* (Toronto: Belfords, Clarke & Co., 1880) [Coles Canadiana Collection, 1971], pp. 50, 69.

5 SBAA, Provencher Papers, "Soumission des habitants de la Rivière Rouge pour un missionnaire, 1817," copy. See also Arrowsmith's map of the Red River Colony in 1816 and early plans of the Red River Colony by W. Kempt (1822-24) and G. Raylor (1836) PAM, HBCA, E.6/10, E.6/11, E.6/13, E.6/14.

6 Lot 754 of the Hudson's Bay Company Survey (hereafter No. 81 and No. 82 of the Dominion Lands Survey) was reserved for the use of the settlers of small lots ("emplacements") 684 to 753 until around

1881. SBAA, Report on the Community of St. Boniface, n.d. [ca. 1881].

7 PAM, MG2, C12, M169, Hudson's Bay Company Land Register "B" and Correlation Book 1908; HBCA, E.6/3 to E.6/14, Land Register Books Nos. 1 and 2, E.6/13, Holders of Land at Red River Settlement with Plans of the same, 1836.

8 Loc. cit.

9 SBAA, Provencher Papers, G.A. Belcourt to C.F. Cazeau, 4 August 1842, copy.

10 D.N. Sprague, "The Manitoba Land Question, 1870-1882," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (1980), pp. 74-84.

11 Manitoba Métis Federation, *Riverlots and Scrip, Elements of Métis Aboriginal Rights* (Manitoba Métis Federation Press, 1978), pp. 1-47.

12 D.N. Sprague, "The Manitoba Land Question 1870-1882," pp. 74-84; "Government Lawlessness in the Administration of Manitoba Land Claims, 1870-1887," *Manitoba Law Journal* Vol. 10, No. 4 (1980), pp. 415-41; and D.N. Sprague and R.P. Frye, *The Genealogy of the First Métis Nation* (Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1983), pp. 27-28.

13 D.N. Sprague, "The Manitoba Land Question, 1870-1882," p. 83.

14 Gehard Ens, "Métis Lands in Manitoba," *Manitoba History*, No. 5 (Spring 1983), pp. 2-11.

15 D.N. Sprague, "The Manitoba Land Question, 1870-1882," p. 83, note 47.

16 SABS, SLSB, M. Aldous, Notebook 747.

17 SABS, Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead File No. 81184.

18 NA, MG26, A, Vol. 105, p. 42343, A.N. Burgess to Sir D.L. Macpherson, April 18, 1885; SABS, J.L. Reid, "Plan of Township 43-1-W3, 1879."

19 SABR, Surveyors' Correspondence files, IV, 4 "Halfbreed Grievances in the Prince-Albert District, 1884-1886," V. Végréville to E. Deville, 19 January 1884. The same is repeated in a petition through the intermediary of Bishop V.J. Grandin, 13 June 1884, NA, MG26, A, Vol. 105, pp. 42261-70: "Mémorial de Messieurs Charles Nolin, Maxime Lépine *et al.*"

20 NA, MG26, A, Vol. 105, p. 42343, A.M. Burgess to D.L. Macpherson, 18 April 1885.

21 SABS, SLSB, M. Aldous, Notebook 747.

22 Loc. cit.

23 SABS, Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead File No. 81184.

24 NA, MG26, A, Vol. 105, p. 42334, "Memorandum regarding North West Half-Breeds." This was stated repeatedly by Commissioner William Pearce although George Duck, the local agent at the time, contradicted this statement, saying the majority had settled previous to the survey. See UAA, W. Pearce Papers, MG 9, Letterbooks, Land Claims, G. Duck to Surveyor General E. Deville, 14 March 1882.

25 SABS, SLSB, J.L. Reid, Notebook 882.

26 NA, MG26, A, Vol. 105, pp. 42098-110, "Copy of a memorial from Lawrence Clarke, Member of the North-West Council to Lieutenant-Governor in Council, 7 June 1881"; and "Copy of a Petition from Reverand Father André of Duck Lake to Lieutenant-Governor in Council"; UAA, W. Pearce Papers, MG 9, Land Claims, Vol. 1, p. 28, W. Pearce to Minister of the Interior, 19 January, 1884.

27 SBAA, L. Schmidt to A.M. Burgess, 26 May 1885, copy.

28 SABR, Surveyors' Correspondence files, IV, 4, V. Végréville to E. Deville, 19 January 1884. G. Duck wrote to the Surveyor-General requesting a resurvey. UAA, W. Pearce Papers, MG 9, Letterbook, Land Claims, Vol. 2, G. Duck to E. Deville, 11 March 1882.

29 Ibid., V. Végréville to E. Deville, 19 January 1884.

30 The government proposed the following plan to adapt a section of 640 acres divided into four quarters of 160 acres each to the riverlot system. Each quarter section was divided into eight parcels — 32 per section. The settler could claim the required parcels in a riverlot pattern. In principle, this was possible, but it was often difficult to incorporate all fields or improvements and, more seriously, the Métis were suspicious of the reliability of such a procedure.

31 UAA, W. Pearce Papers, MG 9, Letterbooks, Land Claims, Vol. I, A.M. Burgess to G. Duck, 21 September 1882.

32 Prince Albert *Times*, 23 May 1883.

33 UAA, W. Pearce Papers, Letterbooks, Land Claims, Vol. 2, W. Pearce to Dominion Lands Commissioner at Winnipeg, 31 October 1885. Pearce was named Superintendent of Mines in Edmonton, 1 June 1884. See also letter of V. Végréville to E. Deville, 29 January 1884; SABS, Surveyors' Correspondence files, IV, 4. He states: "We have for three or four years, an agent who speaks English only" (translation). Mr. Duck spoke Cree and a little French. Both were often necessary to communicate with or understand the Métis.

34 SABR, Surveyors' Correspondence files, IV, 4. V. Végréville to E. Deville, 29 January 1884. The missionary stated that Mr. Gauvreau was competent, but that Louis Schmidt, who was a Métis, spoke French, English, Cree and Saulteaux, essential languages in the district. According to *Le Manitoba*, (St. Boniface) 17 August 1883: "the petition had asked for the nomination of a native-born ... but the position was given to an outsider. The people's wishes were ignored" (translation). Louis Schmidt was named sub-agent in May 1884.

35 SABR, Surveyors' Correspondence files, IV, 4, W. Pearce to A.M. Burgess, 18 January 1886.

36 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1884 [Father Fourmond].

37 NA, RG15, Vol. 335, file 83808.

38 SABS, *Detailed Report upon all Claims to Land and Right to Participate in The North-West Half-Breed Grant by Settlers along the South [Saskatchewan] and Vicinity (14 December 1885)* ... [hereafter cited as *Detailed Report*] (Ottawa: Maclean, Roger & Co., 1886), pp. 1-17.

39 GA, George B. Coutts Papers, Typescript, 1923, W. Pearce To Chairman of Alberta Military Institute, No. 13, 16 October 1923.

40 SABS, *Detailed Report* (1886), p. 1-17. Pearce's figures and cases do not correspond with the evidence in the Homestead and Land Survey Branch files. For example, no patents were actually issued before 1885.

41 Copies of the notices sent to the Métis claimants have not survived in the Department of the Interior (NA, RG 15) records in Ottawa. According to William Pearce's report (SABS, *Detailed Report* [1886]), only one-third of the claimants (81 out of 258, based on Pearce's tabulation) were able to obtain the land requested. But only half of them had fulfilled the three-year residency requirement and less than one-quarter had made "significant improvements" (UAA, Pearce Papers, MG 9, series 5, Vol. 1, file 6, p. 6). Regarding the investigation by Mr. Duck in May 1884, Pearce noted in a letter dated 4 March 1886 that Duck had not gone to St. Louis. The claims of the Bouchers, Richards and others in T45-28-2, in conflict with a colonization company scheme, were only investigated in October 1885. (Ibid., Letterbook, Land Claims, Vol. 5, 1886).

42 DA, V. Fourmond to Sisters of Visitation, Le Mans, 21 December 1884.

43 SHSBA, Frémont Papers, Mémoires de Philippe Garnot, 19 March 1884.

44 GA, Richard Hardisty Papers, file 30A, A.G. Archibald to J.C. Christie, 11 January 1872.

45 NA, MG26, A, Vol. 105, pp. 42127-35, "Petition of the Inhabitants of the District of Lorne, 18 October 1881."

46 GA, Edgar Dewdney Papers, Vol. 3, Sec. 4, E. Dewdney to J.A. Macdonald, 4 February 1885, copy.

47 Loc. cit. The Métis were also informed of this decision by a telegram sent to Charles Nolin.

48 SAB, Regina, Surveyors' Correspondence files, I-273, E. Deville to C.F. Leclerc, 26 December 1888.

49 Loc. cit.

50 SABS, SLSB, C.F. Leclerc, Notebook 4928, 1889.

51 SAB, Regina, Surveyors' Correspondence files, I-417, E. Deville to Deputy Minister of the Interior, 17 August 1896.

52 Ibid., E-418, E. Deville to A.M. Burgess, 8 May 1889.

53 Ibid., I-320, G. McMillan to E. Deville, 26 September 1908 and 16 February 1909.

54 SABS, Department of Agriculture (Saskatchewan), Lands Branch files, riverlots 11-14, St. Laurent Settlement; ibid., Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead File No. 2578579.

55 Chester Martin, *"Dominion Lands" Policy* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973) [Carleton Library Series No. 69], pp. 157-74; James M. Richtik. "The Policy Framework for Settling the Canadian West, 1870-1880," *Agricultural History*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (Oct. 1975), pp. 613-28.

56 SABS, Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead Files, Nos. 4049585, 3333836, 2850508, 781078, 2492466 and ibid., Department of Agriculture (Saskatchewan), Lands Branch file, riverlot 16, St. Laurent Settlement.

57 Idib., Homestead and Lands Branch files with particular reference to lots 28, 34, 39 and 41 (St. Laurent Settlement).

58 Ibid., Homestead File No. 645177.

59 Ibid., Homestead and Lands Branch files regarding lot 48, T42-1-3, Vandal (Abraham Bélanger Jr.); lot 12, T44-1-3, St. Laurent (François Arcand); lot 8, T45-28-2, St. Louis (Célestine Régnier); lot 52, T43-1-3, Batoche (Jean Caron Sr.); and lot 2, T42-1-3, Vandal (Frédéric St-Germain).

60 Ibid., Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead Files Nos. 81184, 564192 and 692951; Ibid., Department of Agriculture (Saskatchewan), Lands Branch files, riverlots 27, 39 and 41 (St. Laurent Settlement Survey). A 1930 order-in-council cancelled

grain mortgages enabling many Métis to obtain their patents. However, it was too late for others who had already left their lands.

61 Ibid., Department of the Interior (Canada) Homestead File No. 81184, and Department of Agriculture (Saskatchewan), Lands Branch regarding sections 7 and 8, T43-1-3.

62 Ibid., Department of Agriculture (Saskatchewan) Lands Branch files, NW quarter-section 18, N half-section 8, T43-1-3; ibid., Department of Natural Resources (Saskatchewan), Provincial Lands Branch, Correspondence about the St. Laurent Settlement, Commissioner J.W. Martin to Registrar of Land Titles in Prince Albert, 4 April 1930.

63 Ibid., Department of Agriculture (Saskatchewan), Lands Branch file, riverlot 48, T42-1-3.

64 Ibid., Department of the Interior (Canada), Homestead File No. 281532.

65 Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1885, pp. 3208-09, cited in John L. Taylor, "An Historical Introduction to Métis claims in Canada," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1983), p. 157. M.P. Joseph Royal, who was being quoted, was a former editor of *Le Métis* [St. Boniface] (1871-81) and former Manitoba Member of Legislature, who had also dealt in scrip. He knew the situation of the Métis.

66 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1884. The resolution was adopted by the executive council of the North-West Territories on 2 August 1879. See also, Canada, Parliament, *Consolidated Statutes of Canada*, 1879, Victoria, ch. 31, sec. 125; sub-sec. (e).

67 Robert Painchaud, "The Catholic Church and the Movement of Francophones to the Canadian Prairies, 1870-1915," PhD thesis, University of Ottawa, 1976, pp. 12-15.

68 PAM, MG3, D1, letter 414, Bishop Taché to Louis Riel, 4 October 1884; GA, Richard Hardisty Papers, file 30A, Plan of bishops Taché and Grandin.

69 NA, RG15, Vol. 239, File 13984, "Petition of Half-breeds of St. Laurent of the North-West Territories, 1 February 1878."

70 J.S. Dennis also proposed a reserve for the Métis. The plan was essentially for a grant of 160 acres of non-negotiable scrip to be located on vacant Dominion Lands for which title would be withheld for a 10-year period. See Canada, Parliament, *Sessional Papers*, Vol. 7, No. 12 (Ottawa: Maclean-Roger, 1884), pp. 93-96.

71 Ken Hatt, "The North West Scrip Commissions as Federal Policy — Some Initial Findings," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1983), pp. 117-29. The author quotes an article by

D.B. Smiley on the National Policy: "Canada and the Quest for a National Policy," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, No. 8 (1974), pp. 40-62.

72 NA, RG2, 28 January 1885, P.C./135.

73 NA, RG2, 30 March 1885, P.C./688. The three Commissioners appointed were: W.P.R. Street, Chairman, Roger Goulet, a Métis and surveyor from St. Boniface, and Amédée E. Forget, a French-Canadian, clerk of the North-West Council and future Lieutenant-Governor of Saskatchewan.

74 NA, RG15, Vol. 88, order-in-council 688/85, pp. 105-06 and Canada, Parliament, *Consolidated Statutes of Canada*, Vol. 1, 1884-85.

75 Loc. cit.

76 NA, RG15, Vol. 632, file 236942, D.H. Macdowall to A.M. Burgess, 19 July 1980. Macdowall reported that 260 Métis took land scrip at Fort Qu'Appelle. According to a report by Street in the 1886 Canada, Parliament, *Sessional Papers*, Vol. 12, No. 45, p. 2, the Street Commission approved 1142 claims of which 236 were taken in land.

77 NA, RG2, 18 April 1885, P.C./821; ibid., 13 April 1886, P.C./657.

78 A second commission headed by Roger Goulet assisted by N.O. Côté was appointed on 1 March 1886. It dealt with 1414 claims of which 1164 were allowed. See Canada, Parliament, *Sessional Papers*, 1887, Vol. 6, No. 7, pp. 76-77.

79 NA, RG15, DII (8)e. Forms E. and J., Batoche only.

80 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1886; DA, V. Fourmond to Mother Gertrude (Sisters of Visitation, Le Mans), 20 October 1886.

81 NA, RG15, Vol. 632, file 236942, D.H. Macdowall to A.M. Burgess, 25 August 1890.

82 Loc. cit.

83 NA, RG15, Vol. 510, file 144363, Petition of 24 February 1886 by Jean Caron, et al.

84 SBAA, Father Fourmond to Bishop Taché, 20 October 1886. Petition of John Ross, et al.

85 Loc. cit.

86 Loc. cit.

87 NA, MG26, Vol. 6, 737, pp. 208184-87.

88 NA, RG15, Vol. 589, file 198086.

89 NA, RG18, Vol. 32, No. 22-89, A.B. Perry to Commissioner in Regina, 25 March 1889.

90 PAA, OMI, Little chronicle of St. Laurent, 1890. See also NA, RG15, Vol. 492, file 138650, "Pétition d'Emmanuel Champagne, le député C.-E. Boucher et cent soixante-trois signataires en faveur des scrips, 1895."

91 NA, RG15, Vol. 100, order-in-council, 29 April 1899 and 6 May 1899, pp. 171-73 and Canada, Parliament, *Canada Gazette*, 1899, order-in-council 918/1899.

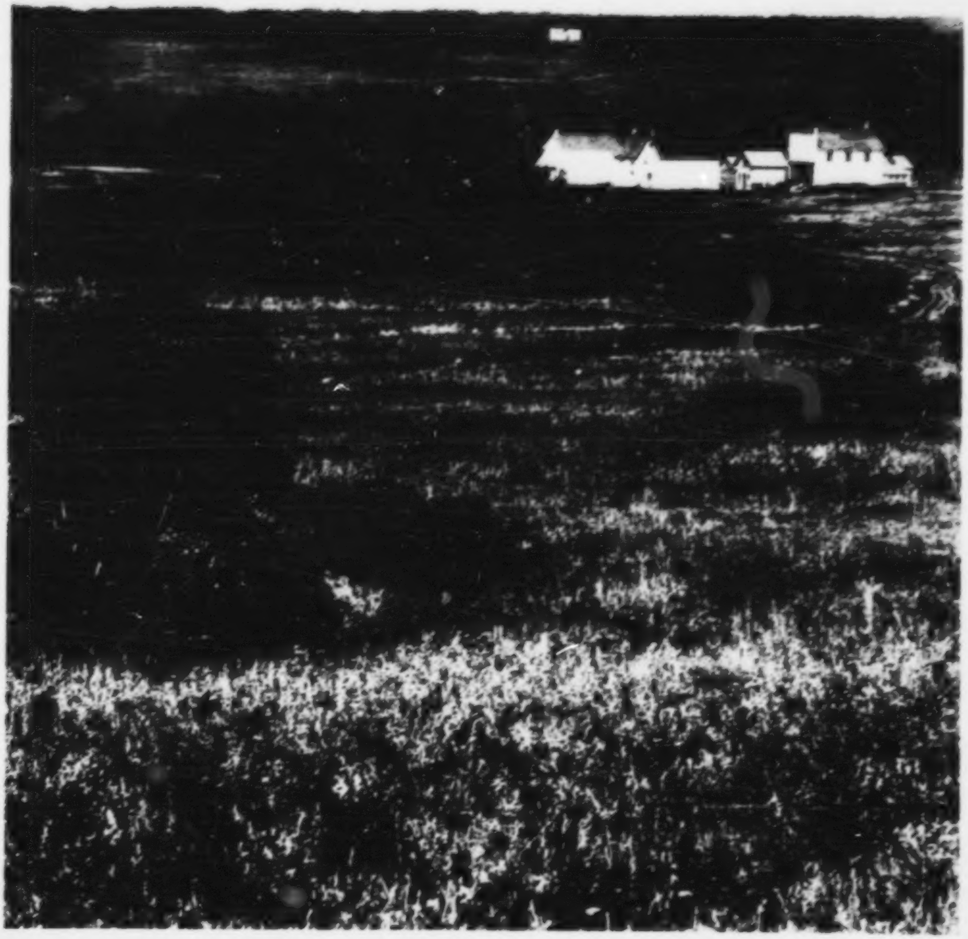
92 Loc. cit.

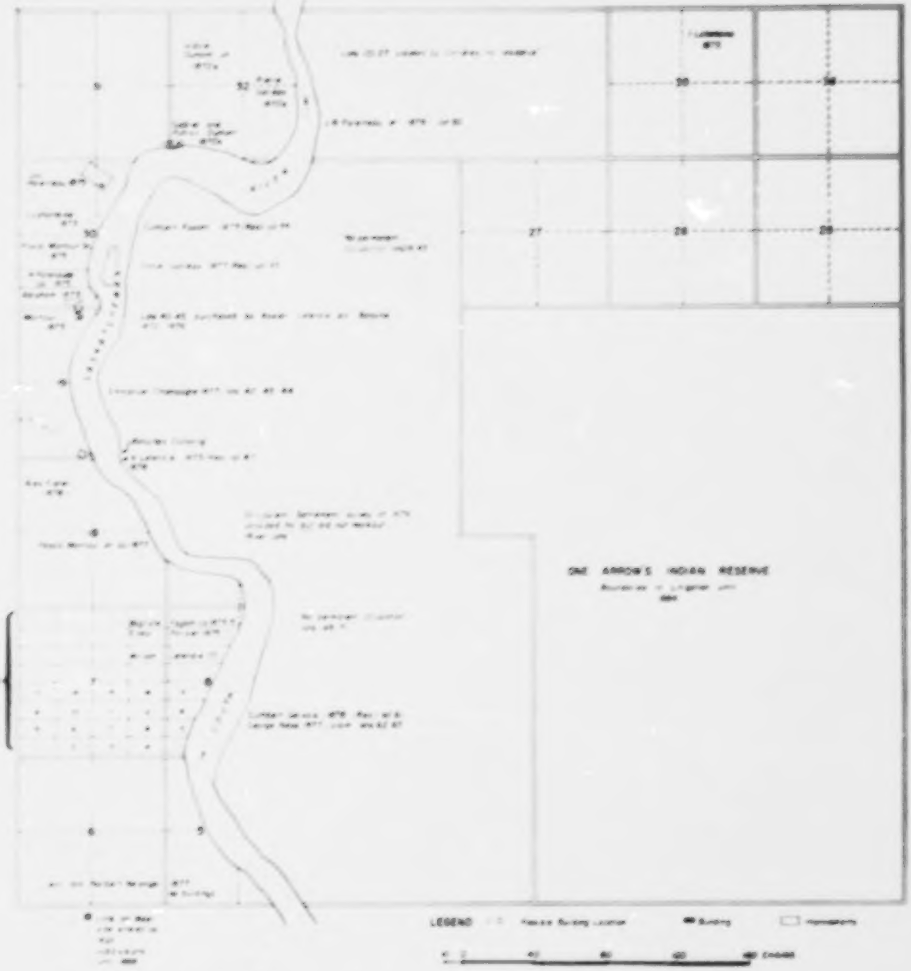
93 NA, RG15, Vol. 492, file 138650, "Pétition des Métis de Batoche et de Duck Lake (Lac au Canard), 24 janvier 1900, présentée par le député Charles Fisher." See order-in-council of 2 March 1900: RG2, P.C./438.

94 NA, RG15, DII, 8(e).

95 NA, RG15, DII, 8(e), Vol. 1539, Names, Date of Patent, Assignee.

96 NA, MG26, G, Vol. 118, C. Fisher to W. Laurier, 14 July 1899.

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29
ONE ARROW'S INDIAN RESERVE
LEGEND

Fig. 44 Land claims at Batoche in the 1870s. Note the "legal subdivision" of lots on the left side of the river and the "riverlots" in the "St. Laurent Settlement" and along the east (right) side. *Saskatchewan Archives Board, Regina and Saskatoon, Homestead Files, Land Branch Files, and Surveyors Notebooks.*

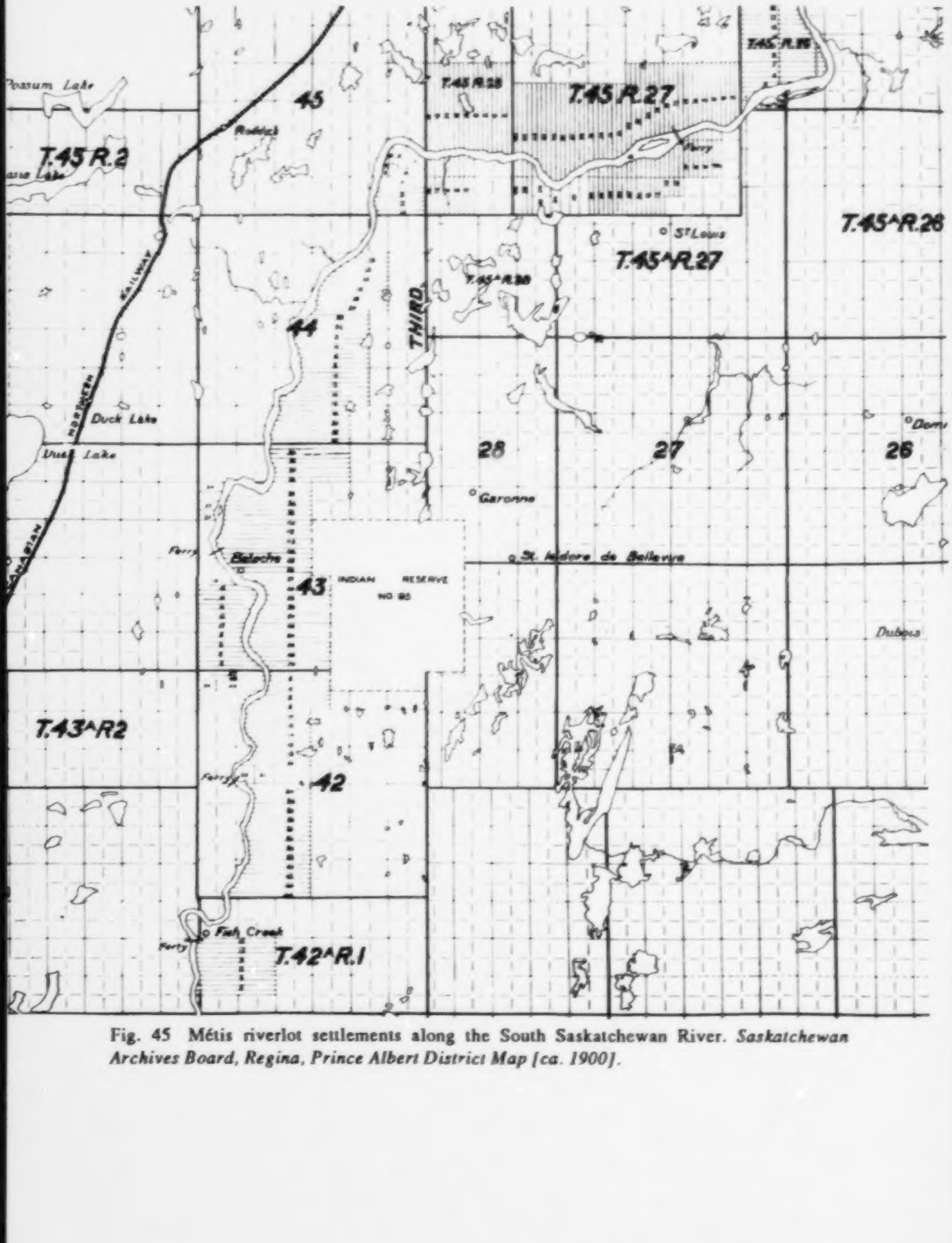

Possum Lake
T.45 R.2
45
Roddick
T.45 R.28
T.45 R.27
T.45 R.26
Ferry
St Louis
T.45^R.27
T.45^R.26
T.45^R.28
RAILWAY
NORTHERN
CANADIAN
Duck Lake
44
THIRD
28
27
26
Garonne
Ferry
Batoche
St. Isidore de Bellevue
43
INDIAN RESERVE NO. 80
Dubois
T.43^R2
42
Ferry
Fish Creek
Ferry
T.42^R.1

Fig. 45 Métis riverlot settlements along the South Saskatchewan River. *Saskatchewan Archives Board, Regina, Prince Albert District Map [ca. 1900].*

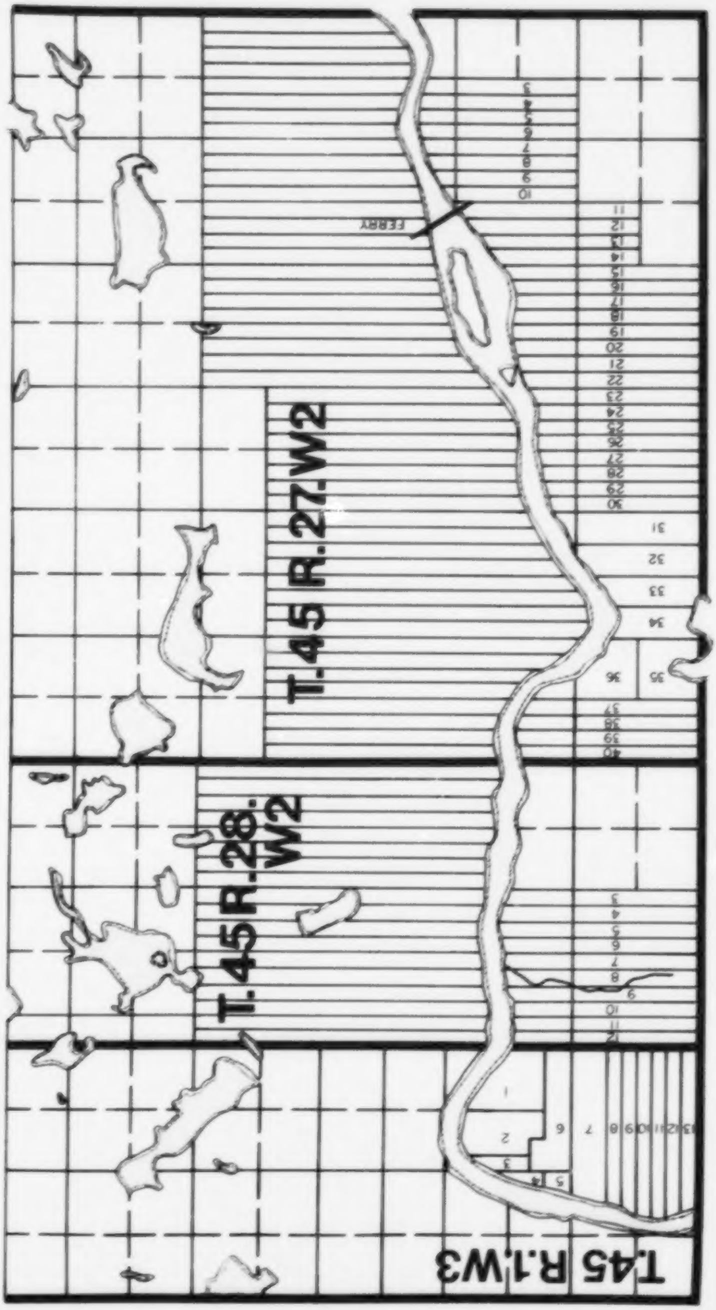

T.45 R.27.W2
T.45 R.28. W2
T.45 R.1.W3
FERRY

Fig. 46 Land claims and the settlement at St-Louis-de-Langevin (St. Louis) [according to the 1890 resurvey]. *Map by David Erick, PNRO.*

T45-1-3:

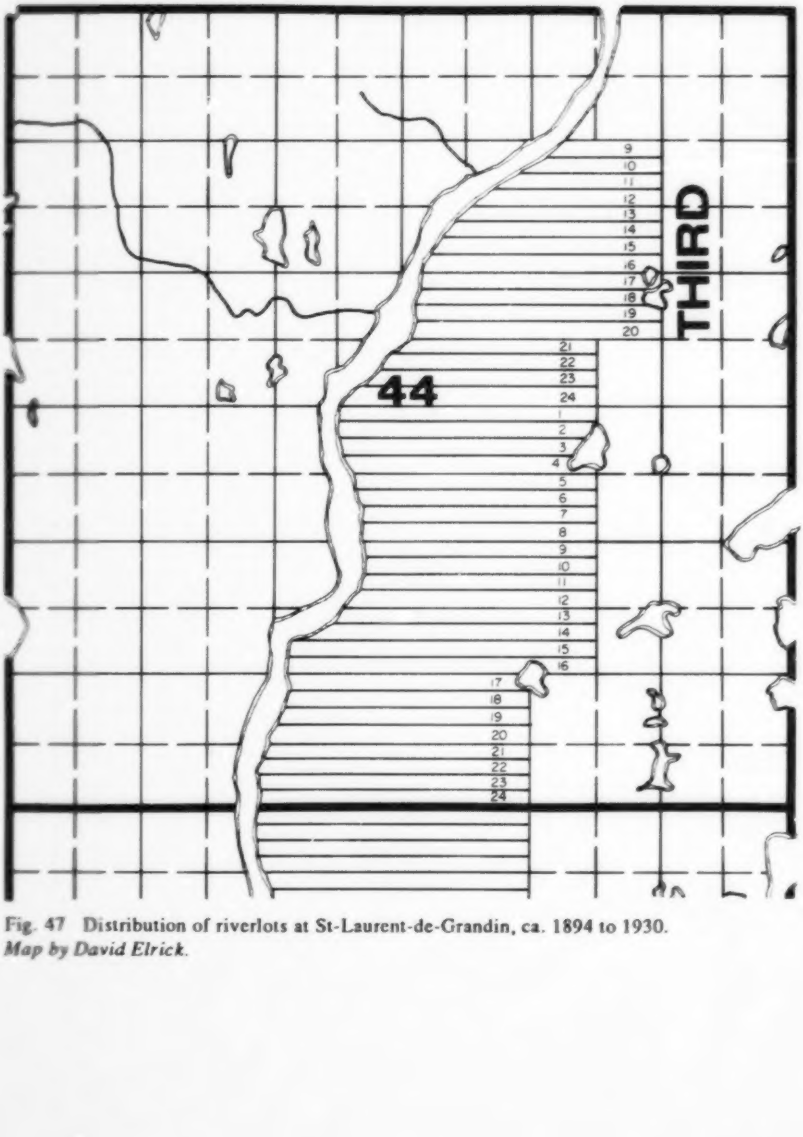
1 Octave Régnier
2 Marguerite Ouellette
3 P. Gariépy - Hayter Reed
4 Philippe Gariépy
5 Louis Schmidt
6 Philippe Gariépy - T.J. Agnew
7 L. Schmidt
8 Justine Laviolette
9 James Short
10 Sedley Bird
11 W.H. Misener
12 Jules Boucher
13 Ernest Boucher

T45-27-2:

11 J.-Baptiste Boucher, Sr.
12 J.-Baptiste Boucher, Sr.
13 E. Lecoq, OMI
14 Odilon St-Denis
15 J.-Baptiste Boucher, Jr.
16 William Bremner
17 Moïse Bremner
18 Franz Hauser
19 Magloire Boyer
20 Jos. Bremner
21 Jonas Laviolette
22 Edmond Lefebvre
23 Antoine Richard
24 Flora Fidler
25 Charles Laviolette
26 William and John Bruce
27 Ambroise Richard
28 Napoléon Boyer
29 Magloire Boyer
30 Georges Fidler
31 Alcide Légaré
32 Louis Schmidt
33 W half 33 - E half 34:
Alexandre Bremner
34 E half 33 - W half 34:
Pantaléon Schmidt
35 William Richard
36 —
37 Pierre Van Brempt
38 Frank Bruce
39 Antoine and William Richard
40 J.-Baptiste Boscher

T45-28-2:

3 Norbert Turcotte
4 Norbert Turcotte
5 Maxime Lépine, Sr.
6 Maxime Lépine, Jr.
7 Louis Letendre
8 Octave and Célestine Régnier
9 J.-Baptiste Boucher, Jr.
10 Patrice Lépine
11 J.-Baptiste Boucher
12 Charles Ferguson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THIRD
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Fig. 47 Distribution of riverlots at St-Laurent-de-Grandin, ca. 1894 to 1930. *Map by David Elrick.*

T44-1-3:

9	Domithilde Dumont (widow of Jean)
10	Domithilde Dumont (widow of Jean)
11	Maurice Hollinger
12	François Arcand
13	François Fidler
14	François Fidler
15	Chrysostome Boyer
16	Georges Ferguson
17	—
18	Joseph Dorcey
19	Ernest Arcand
20	Charles Laviolette
21	James Taylor
22	Henri Pilon
23	François Dumas
24	Isidore Parenteau

“St. Laurent Settlement”:

1	André and Catherine Letendre
2	William Ferguson
3	Léon Fergusen
4	Jos. Nolin
5	Hélène and Jérôme Racette
6	Baptiste and Elisabeth Boyer
7	Robert Venne
8	Gilbert Breland - Tobie Boyer
9	William Boyer
10	Damase and Mary-Jane Racette
11	Moïse and Élisabeth Ouellette
12	Moïse Ouellette, Jr.
13	Moïse Ouellette, Sr.
14	Moïse, Jr. and Joseph Ouellette
15	Baptiste Ouellette
16	William Boyer
17	Baptiste Parenteau - Jos. Dumont
18	Alexandre Boyer
19	Antoine Ferguson, Jr.
20	St-Pierre Parenteau
21	Pélagie Carrière-Dubois
22	Ambroise Gervais
23	Louis Pilon
24	Antoine Ferguson, Sr.

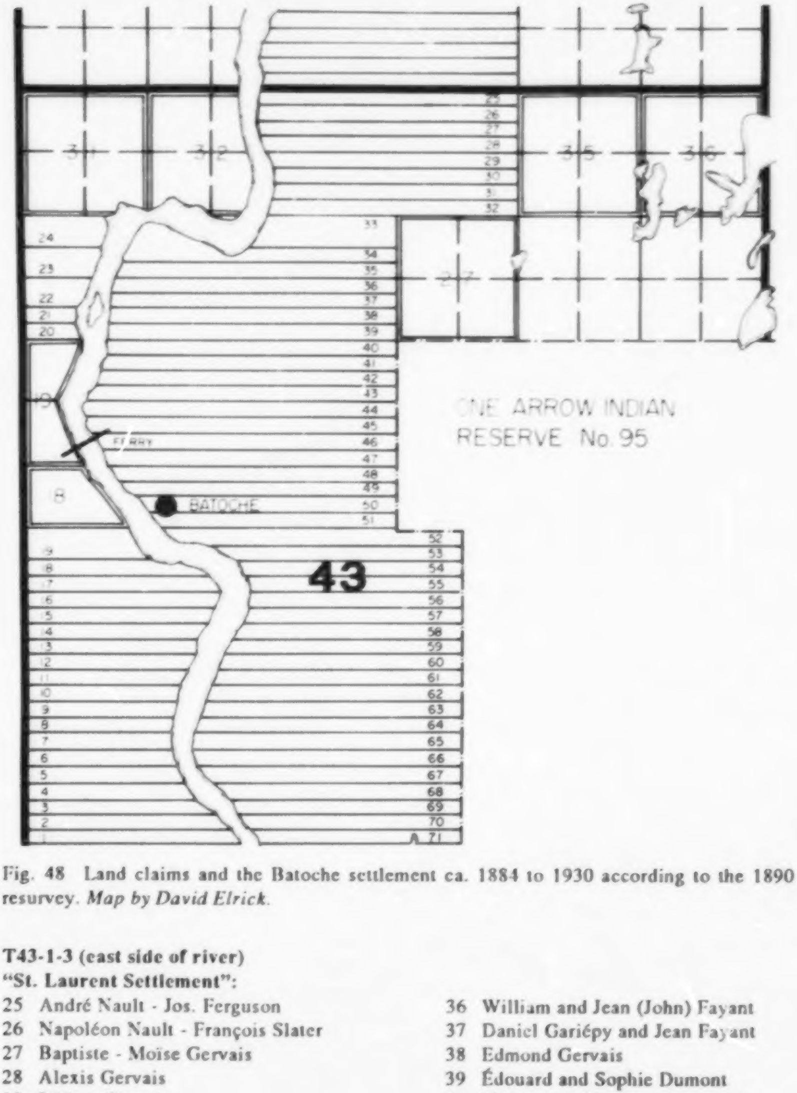


Fig. 48 Land claims and the Batoche settlement ca. 1884 to 1930 according to the 1890 resurvey. *Map by David Elrick.*

T43-1-3 (east side of river)
"St. Laurent Settlement":

25 André Nault - Jos. Ferguson
26 Napoléon Nault - François Slater
27 Baptiste - Moïse Gervais
28 Alexis Gervais
29 Isidore Gervais
30 Baptiste Parenteau
31 Guillaume Laplante
32 Pierre Gervais
33 S half: Calixte Lafontaine - N half: Jos. Lafontaine
34 Alfred and Jean Fayant
35 Corber and William Fayant
36 William and Jean (John) Fayant
37 Daniel Gariépy and Jean Fayant
38 Edmond Gervais
39 Édouard and Sophie Dumont
40 Moïse and Véronique Parenteau
41 Pierre and Marie-Anne Parenteau
42 George Grant
43 Cléophas Champagne
44 Emmanuel and Marie Champagne
45 Xavier Letendre - Jos. Branconnier
46 Xavier Letendre
47 Xavier Letendre

48 N half: Xavier Letendre - S half: Charles Thomas
49 N half: Charles Thomas, J.-B. Ranger - S half: C. Pilon
50 OMI (St-Antoine-de-Padoue)
51 OMI (St-Antoine-de-Padoue)
52 Jean Caron, Sr.
53 Jean Caron, Jr.
54 Barthélémi Pilon
55 Salomon Venne
56 Norbert Delorme - Jos. Ladéroute
57 Raphaël Boyer
58 Josephte Tourond
59 Patrice Gervais - Louis Letendre
60 Modeste Parenteau
61 Corbet Gervais
62 George Ness
63 Pierre Caron
64 Jean Desmarais - William Pilon
65 Barthélémi Pilon
66 François Ladouceur - Jos. Pilon Jr.
67 Jos. Pilon, Sr.
68 Patrice Caron
69 Isidore Dumas
70 Alexandre Pilon
71 Pierre Parenteau, Jr.

Section 27:
N-W quarter: A. Gaudet
S-W quarter: R. Gaudet
N-E quarter: Jos. Dupuis
S-E quarter: E. Dupuis

Section 35:
S-W quarter: A. Lafontaine
N-E quarter: I. and Jos. Lafontaine

Section 36:
N-W quarter: Létournel and Leroy
S-W quarter: Baptiste Parenteau, Jr.

T43-1-3 (west side of river)
Section 31:
N-E quarter: A. Vanpeteghen
N-W quarter: B. Montour
S-E quarter: P. Géry
S-W quarter: J. Paradis

Section 32:
S-W quarter: Isodore Dumont, Jr.

Riverlots:
24 Jos. "Dodet" Parenteau
23 Isidore Lafontaine
22 Pascal Montour - J. Rousset
21 Hilaire Patenaude - J. Rousset
20 Abraham Moutour

Section 19:
S-W quarter: Abraham Montour
S-W quarter corner: Alex Pierre Fisher

Section 18:
N-W quarter: Alex Pierre Fisher

Riverlots:
19 Louis Letendre, Jr.
18 Eugène Letendre
17 Jos. Letendre

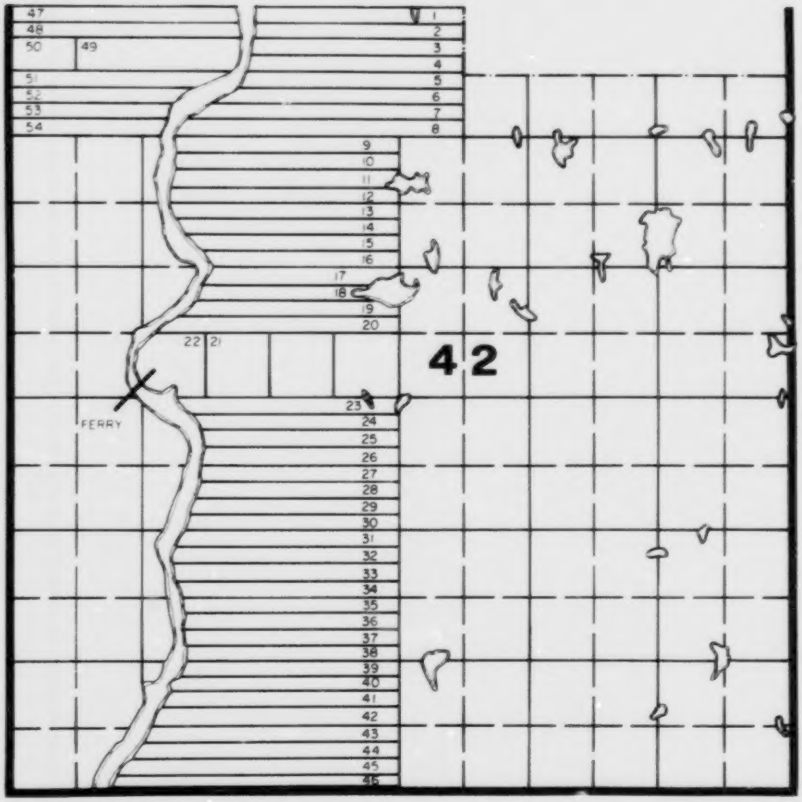
16 Elzéar Parisien - François Lanovaz
15 Athanase Falcon - Albert Laplante
14 —

Claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company between 1844 and 1891

13 —
12 —
11 —
10 —
9 —

Given to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1891. Transferred to Saskatchewan Government in 1930.

8 David Slater
7 François Vandal
6 Normand Fidler
5 Alex Pilon
4 François Parenteau
3 Baptiste Letendre
2 Alex Parenteau
1 Norbert Bélanger - C. Brun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FERRY
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Fig. 49 Identification of riverlots at Vandal and at Gabriel's Crossing, ca. 1884 to 1910. *Map by David Elrick.*

T42-1-3:

1 Patrice Parenteau
2 Frédéric St-Germain
3 Charles-Eugène Boucher
4 Louis Parenteau
5 André Sansregret - Georges Parenteau
6 Maxime Dubois - Baptiste Parenteau
7 Pierre Ledoux - Alfred Carrière
8 Ambroise Dubois
9 Napoléon Parenteau
10 Maxime and Michel Poitras
11 Michel Poitras
12 Théophile Caron
13 Ignace Poitras, Jr.
14 Henri Poitras
15 Ignace Poitras, Sr.
16 Ignace Poitras, Sr.
17 Marie (Primeau) Vandal
18 Wasyl Zamolski
19 Philippe Garnot
20 Philippe Garnot
21 Gabriel Dumont
22 Gabriel Dumont
23 Joseph and Étienne Vandal
24 Isidore Villeneuve
25 Frank Buniak
26 Wasilena Kapacila
27 Pierre and Norbert Henry
28 Pierre Vandal
29 Joseph (Cotit) Vandal - Clovis Nogier
30 Pierre Henry
31 Isidore Villeneuve
32 Charles Carrière
33 Joseph Branconnier
34 Jérôme Henry
35 Antoine Vandal, Jr.
36 Baptiste Rocheleau
37 Marie (Carrière) Rocheleau
38 Maurice Henry
39 Corbet Fidler - Peter Buhl
40 Ivan Fediasz
41 Yuko Fediasz
42 Modeste Rocheleau - Sofron Civik
43 William Rocheleau - Frank Boczar
44 Leoko Kozar
45 Narcisse Henry - John Fidler
46 David Desrivières
47 Jean Bélanger - Edmond Pilon
48 Abraham Bélanger, Jr.
49 Abraham Bélanger, Sr.
50 -
51 Élie Nault - Albert Caron
52 Marguerite Caron
53 Albert Cadot
54 Daniel Charette

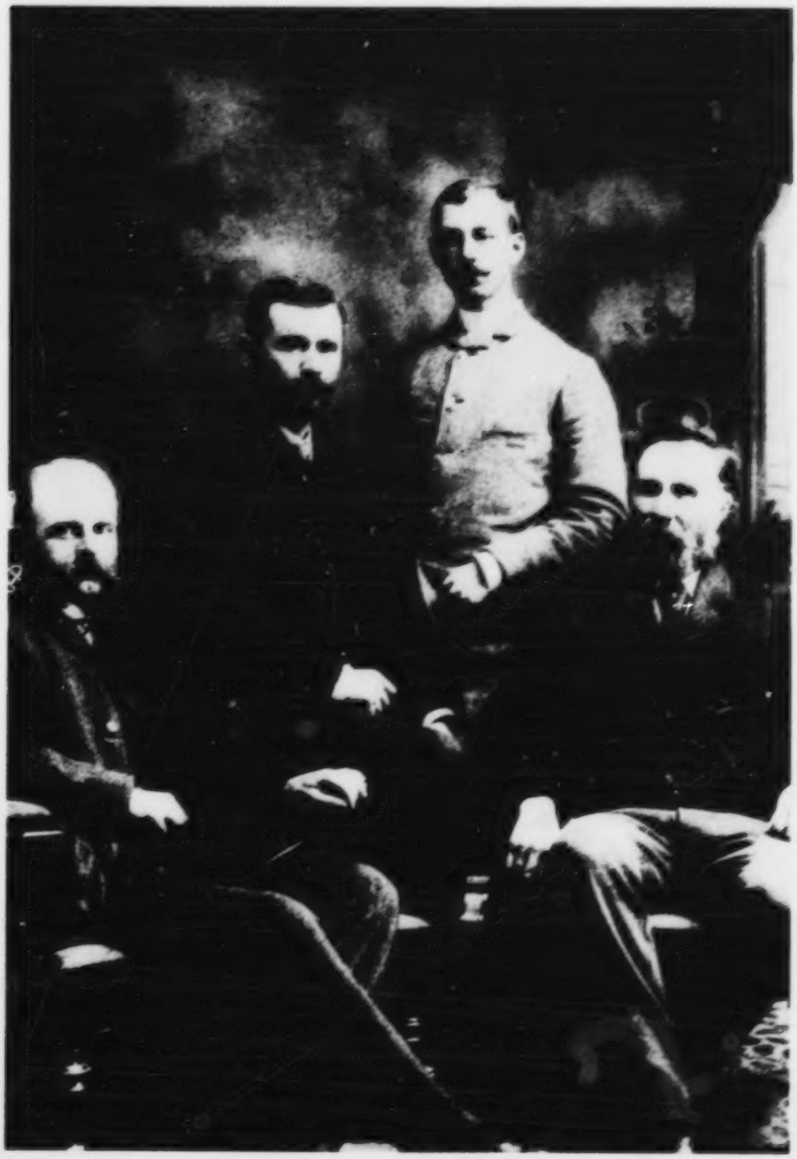
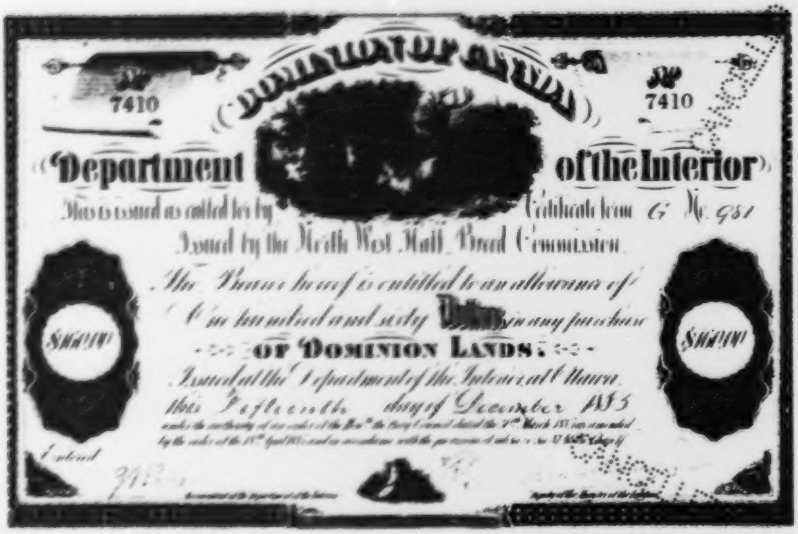


Fig. 50 The North West Halfbreed Scrip Commission of 1885. The commissioners, from left to right: W.P.R. Street, Roger Goulet, N.O. Côté (secretary) and A.E. Forget. *National Archives of Canada, C-28367.*



DOMINION OF CANADA

No 7410

No 7410

Department of the Interior

This is issued as called for by Certificate form G No. 951

Issued by the North West Half Breed Commission

The Bearer hereof is entitled to an allowance of One hundred and sixty Dollars in any purchase

OF DOMINION LANDS.

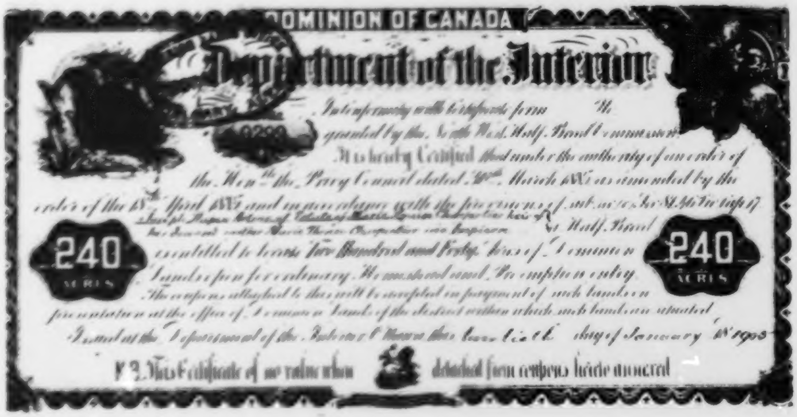
Issued at the Department of the Interior at Ottawa this Fifteenth day of December 1885

$160.00

$160.00

Entered

CANCELLED



DOMINION OF CANADA

Department of the Interior

In conformity with Certificate form [illegible] granted by the North West Half Breed Commission

It is hereby Certified that under the authority of an order of the Hon. the Privy Council dated 30th March 1885 as amended by the order of the 18th April 1885 and in accordance with the provisions of [illegible] [illegible] Half Breed is entitled to locate Two Hundred and Forty Acres of Dominion Lands open for ordinary Homestead and Pre-emption entry.

The coupons attached to this will be accepted in payment of such lands on presentation at the office of Dominion Lands of the district within which such lands are situated.

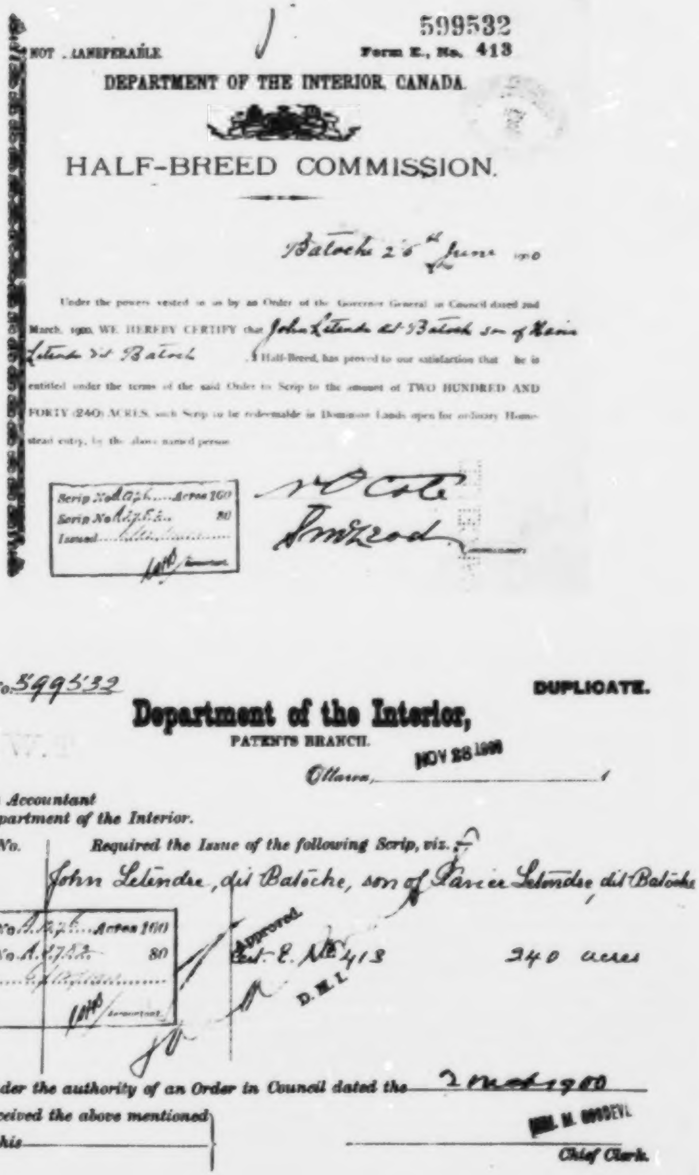
Issued at the Department of the Interior Ottawa this twentieth day of January 1905

N.B. This Certificate of no value when detached from coupons hereto annexed

240 ACRES

240 ACRES

Fig. 51 Scrip certificates valued at (a) $160 in 1885 and (b) at 240 acres in 1905, both issued by the Department of the Interior. *National Archives of Canada, RG15, Vol. 1391, 1406 (C-132171 and C-132172).*



599532

NOT TRANSFERABLE

Form E., No. 413

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, CANADA.

HALF-BREED COMMISSION.

Batoche 26th June 1900

Under the powers vested in us by an Order of the Governor General in Council dated 2nd March, 1900, WE HEREBY CERTIFY that John Letendre dit Batoche son of Xavier Letendre dit Batoche, a Half-Breed, has proved to our satisfaction that he is entitled under the terms of the said Order to Scrip to the amount of TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY (240) ACRES, such Scrip to be redeemable in Dominion Lands open for ordinary Homestead entry, by the above named person.

Scrip No. [illegible] Acres 160
Scrip No. [illegible] 80
Issued [illegible]

Coté

McLeod

Ref. No. 599532

DUPLICATE.

Department of the Interior,

PATENTS BRANCH.

N.W.T.

Ottawa, NOV 28 1900

To the Accountant
Department of the Interior.

Scrip No. | Required the Issue of the following Scrip, viz.:—

John Letendre, dit Batoche, son of Xavier Letendre, dit Batoche,

Scrip No. [illegible] Acres 160
Scrip No. A. [illegible] 80
Issued [illegible]

Approved

Cert. E. No. 413

D.M.I.

240 acres

Under the authority of an Order in Council dated the 2 March 1900

Received the above mentioned Scrip this

M. GOODEVE
Chief Clerk.

Fig. 52 Scrip awarded to John Letendre dit Batoche in 1900. *Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatoon, Homestead File Nos. 689 and 671 (S-B8302 and S-B8303).*

CONCLUSION

The Métis community of the South Saskatchewan River district was in some ways an extension of the Red River Settlement and the early Manitoba experience. But it was also a society in transition. Its members came from a variety of backgrounds and occupations. There were experienced politicians, enterprising merchants and skilled traders as well as a large labour force of trappers, "freighters" and farmers. The Métis who migrated further west in the 1870s and 1880s were generally more militant and assertive than their Manitoba compatriots. Their departure from Manitoba was in essence a protest against the new order, particularly Riel's banishment, against Ontario immigration, and against the economic and political disorder that resulted.

It was not individuals but families, more specifically extended families, who made the trek. The network of "la parenté" (kinship) promoted solidarity, social stability and continuity. The nature of Métis economic activity also ensured continuous interaction with other parent communities in the Qu'Appelle, Wood Mountain and Ile à la Crosse districts as well as across the border in North Dakota and Montana.

The merchants, freighters, trappers and farmers of Batoche formed an economic unit that promoted the commercial success and vitality of the settlement at the turn of the century. Contrary to all studies on Batoche to date, which focus almost exclusively on the destructive impact of the "North-West Rebellion," there was no final destruction nor dispersal of the local population, although commercial activities were interrupted and some were people inevitably displaced in 1885. Such myths, as well as that of the Métis unwillingness to settle on and farm their lands, are disproved upon specific inquiry. Analysis of homestead files for the area revealed that most of the Métis who entered lands in the post-1885 period still occupied them in 1910. Similarly, although financial considerations forced the majority to accept money scrip in 1886, an increasing number chose land scrip under more favourable economic conditions in 1900. Government policies based largely on expediency combined with conflicting ideologies regarding land and settlement were at the root of the tension and resentment between Eurocanadians and Métis.

It was as a culture and way of thinking that the Métis were least understood. The Métis believed that as a people native to the North-West, their customs and lifestyle should be respected and take precedence over those newly entering the region. They were the "gens libres," the independent people, who considered themselves distinct from both Eurocanadians and Natives: essentially "a New Nation." In response to prevalent 19th century European attitudes towards native and mixed-blood peoples, many Métis emphasized their European heritage and declared they were not "sauvages" (savages). Nonetheless, they also respected their native traditions usually transmitted through their mothers and grandmothers. As a product of two cultures, the Métis borrowed from one and the other making necessary adaptations. This syncretism[1] was particularly evident in their "métchif" language, music, foods, cultural events of "fêtes" and in their religious beliefs and worship. Catholic dogma and teaching, which stressed "civilization and christianization" according to a European model, provided little scope for the integration or propagation of native beliefs. There was some evidence, however, of adaptation of Catholic ritual by the clergy to accommodate local traditions. In an economic and social context, the Métis acted as intermediaries between Amerindians and Eurocanadians. However, this difficult and often contradictory role added to their isolation and made them suspicious to both groups. Batoche was located in proximity to both Indian reserves and French-Canadian or other "parent" establishments. This situation offered opportunity for a close relationship to the two parent groups. At Batoche, however, evidence suggests tensions between the Métis and their Native and French-Canadian neighbours. The French-Canadians of Bellevue were condescending towards the "Batochiens"[2] and there was little interaction between the Métis and the Willow Cree at the neighbouring Kàpeyakwàskonam (One Arrow) Reserve, except at "official" levels.

Investigation of Métis social life and customs at Batoche and surrounding communities suggests greater identification with their French-Canadian than native heritage in the late 19th century. The way of thinking and lifestyle of the Xavier Letendre, Salomon Venne, Jean Caron, Joseph Pilon, and Baptiste Boucher families, for example, clearly support this hypothesis. They spoke Cree and Ojibwa (Saulteaux) but the language they used was "Métchif-Français." They gave French names to their baptized children, but according to tradition called each by a native nickname. Their social customs were more "canayennes." The Métis made use of herbal medicines but visited the "ramancheur" (healer), celebrated New Year's Day and developed their farms according to the seignorial riverlot pattern. There is evidence, however, that other families "lived as or more closely to the Indians,"[3] especially when a parent was Native or their occupation involved close contact. This usually meant persistence of practices such as marriages "à la façon du pays," seasonal movements or "hivernements" and a certain mistrust of the more acquisitive "Canadianized" Métis. With respect to their European roots, there is indication that the Métis around Batoche made little distinction between their French, Scottish, English or other European ancestry. Family ties, culture and religion determined their identification as Métis rather than "halfbreeds." On the other hand, the clergy and some of their leaders encouraged the Métis to identify themselves with their French-Canadian compatriots during the period of western migration, a policy that promoted acculturation.

Politics was one field in which the Métis of this region seemed particularly skillful and successful, more specifically after 1885. It is possible that the armed resistance and demise of Riel prompted the Government to pursue the policy of appeasement which followed. Many former Manitoba Métis such as Maxime Lépine, Charles Nolin and Louis Schmidt were experienced politicians. New leadership, skillful exploitation of the party system and access to patronage resulted in increased representation and some favourable policies.

The economic and social changes of the post-1910 period in the West brought increased isolation and displacement to the Métis. Internal rivalries and more subtle conditions such as lack of formal education and the emergence of a welfare mentality were impediments to the integration of succeeding generations. Persistence and adaptation which marked the 1885-1910 period gave way to disillusionment and withdrawl.

This study had some limitations in its inquiry. Particular features of Métis culture: language, folklore and material culture, need further investigation. There is also need for more case studies to provide additional bases for comparative analysis. The native component of Métis history has been almost neglected to date; probably because of the cultural limitations of most researchers and the nature of its record, the oral tradition. Inquiry into the influence of Cree and Ojibwa (Saulteaux) traditions on

Métis way of thinking and behaviour, for example, would provide additional insight into many aspects of Métis society and economy.

Inspired by these themes and considerations, this study has endeavoured to provide new insight into a complex and largely misrepresented Métis community in the North-West in the latter part of the 19th century.

Notes

Conclusion

1 The term is used by Jacqueline Peterson in "Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis," *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Winter 1978), pp. 41-67. Roughly, syncretism is a tendency to reconcile different religious or philosophical beliefs, absorbing some of the tenets of one into the other system.

2 The expression "Batochiens," a racial slur, was reported by some middle-aged Métis in our interviews. They did stress, however, that attitudes had changed and that relations between younger Métis and French-Canadians were more cordial.

3 Father Pierre Myre in a letter to Bishop Prud'homme around 1927, referred to the Ojibwa (Saulteaux) native origins of many families at St-Laurent-de-Grandin as opposed to the Cree ancestry of the Batoche and St. Louis families. He attempted to associated this with the more "primitive" lifestyle and "rebellious" attitude of the Métis of St. Laurent. Prince albert Diocese Archives, P.E. Myre to Bishop J.H. Prud'homme, n.d. [1927].

APPENDIX A

NOTES ON QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF HOMESTEAD DECLARATIONS

There were two series of land applications made by the Métis. The 1884 applications or declarations were part of a survey of residents of the South Saskatchewan River district conducted by the Dominion Lands Agent, Mr. G. Duck, accompanied by a local priest, Father A. André, in May 1884. They were perceived by the government as a preliminary step in the process of actual homestead entry and application for patent or title, in short a sort of pre-entry or affidavit. The Métis, on the other hand, thought that this application was merely a formality that would confirm their landholdings or customary usage and that they would receive "free patents." They believed that as a native people of the North-West they should not have to conform to the homestead regulations established for the Eurocanadian settlers or newcomers. The government, however, did not recognize this principle and status. The Métis would have to abide by the same regulations as the newcomers, that is, make official entry and pay a $10 entry fee, fulfil established residency and cultivation requirements and then apply for patent. Their native claims would be dealt with later and separately.

The local Métis population became confused and angered over this situation which was one of the causes of the outbreak of the armed resistance in March 1885. The Métis who made declarations in 1884 were reportedly advised whether or not they could obtain entry for their lands. But no patents were issued subsequent to these applications before 1885. However, many of the 1884 applicants subsequently made official entry and obtained patent for lands requested in 1884 (code 1).

The post-1884 records deal with actual or official homestead entries and applications for patent. Homestead entry was required of all settlers in the North-West, Métis and non-Métis. There is evidence, however, that a number of Métis resided on lands for years without making official entry. Some subsequently did, while others simply left their claim and relocated elsewhere. This pattern is reflected in both 1884 and post-1884 records.

Number of Cases for Each Record Type

Code	Record Type	Cases	Percent
1	1884 - Obtains patent	38	15.0
2	1884 - Does not obtain patent	23	9.1
3	Post-1884 - New. Does not obtain patent	6	2.4
4	Post-1884 - New. Obtains patent	128	50.6
5	Post-1884 - Previous. Obtains patent	40	15.8
6	Post-1884 - Multiple-lot entries	18	7.1
Total		253	100.0

Ethnic Background by Record Type

	Codes						
Background	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Métis	37	23	5	98	38	16	217
Non-Métis	1	0	1	30	2	2	36
Total	38	23	6	128	40	18	253

Place of Origin of Métis Homestead Applicants

Entry In 1884	Entry In 1884	Entry Post-1884	Total No.	Percent
Manitoba	52	59	111	70.3
NWT	7	36	43	27.2
USA	0	4	4	2.5
Total No.	59	99	158	100.0

Missing Cases: 5

Records of all Métis homestead applicants from 1884, and new applicants making entry after 1884, were used in this table (codes 1, 2, 3, 4).

A quantitative analysis of 253 Homestead declarations (217 Métis and 36 non-Métis) provides the basis for the tables and discussion on Métis land entries. There are two series of Homestead applications: 1884 special declarations, and post-1884 to ca. 1925 patent applications for the following communities along the South Saskatchewan River:

St. Laurent, "St. Laurent Settlement"	T44-1-3, lots 1-25
Batoche, "St. Laurent Settlement"	T43-1-3, lots 25-71
Vandal and Fish Creek	T42-1-3
St. Louis (post-1884 only)	T45-1-3, T45-27-2, T45-28-2

Selection was based primarily on riverlot claims on the east bank (south shore) of the South Saskatchewan River although a few sectional claims in Batoche were also included. A series of frequency charts and cross-tabulations were generated for the two declaration types, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The object of the inquiry was to help illustrate possible Métis attitudes and persistence regarding land claims. This was evaluated on the basis of variables such as: absenteeism; history of the land claim (according to unofficial and official documents); years of continuous residence; number of years between residence and entry; number of years between entry and patent, and year of patent. Cultivation and livestock data were also tabulated, to illustrate agricultural activities (see chapter "The Economy"). Some of the post-1884 records, more specifically records in Code 5, tabulate previous or 1884 applicants while the 18 records in Code 6 show those who made more than one entry, in most cases, for a second homestead. During the analysis care was taken not to duplicate record data, particularly in the case of codes 5 and 6. Analysis was done from one set of records and in the case of codes 4 and 6, for example, personal data were not duplicated.

The two sets of forms, 1884 and post-1884, did not all request the same information. There was more uniformity in the 1884 declaration, although replies were more evasive. Because of the time span for the post-1884 records (ca. 1884-1925 or later), the application form also varied. In the tables, "missing cases" refer to situations where the information was not reported or not applicable.

APPENDIX B

PERSONS INTERVIEWED BETWEEN 1976 AND 1983

Fred Anderson (ca. 1890-1976), Duck Lake, 1976.

Mr. Anderson's parents came to Duck Lake in the early 1880s. He was born and raised in the community and came to know many of its inhabitants. His views may reflect the Anglo-Protestant mentality of the early 1900s, but many of his comments also suggest tolerance and appreciation of the Métis, particularly their work as "cowboys" and farm labourers.

Béatrice Boucher, née Lépine (1893-1979), St. Louis, 1977.

Her paternal grandfather, Maxime Lépine, was a member of Riel's Provisional Government in 1885. Her husband, Frédéric Boucher, was the son of Jean-Baptiste Boucher Sr., one of St. Louis' founding families. This heritage gave Mrs. Boucher intimate contact with many families in the community. She recalled the exodus of many families to set up ranches in Montana and Alberta the turn of the century. Most returned with large herds. She also talked of the trek of some young men to the Yukon during the gold rush, the Spanish flu of 1900-01 and her personal feelings about her Métis heritage.

Alfred Boyer (1890-), St. Louis, 1981.

A descendant of one of the founding families of St. Louis, Mr. Boyer was 92 when interviewed. He recalled specifically early working conditions and farming activities at St. Louis.

Marguerite Campbell, née Branconnier (1903-78), Rosthern, 1976.

She was the daughter of Joseph Branconnier who had a store at Fish Creek and then took over Letendre's store at Batoche around 1915. The family lived upstairs over the store until it burned in 1923. Marguerite attended school and was married in Batoche. She had particularly vivid recollections of Miss Dorval, the school's instructress.

Omer Courchesne, Duck Lake, 1982.

Mr. Courchesne was a French Canadian who taught at Batoche, St. Laurent and Duck Lake. To be specific, he resided periodically in the rectory at Batoche in the late 1930s and early 1940s. He witnessed the economic difficulties of the 1930s, the mixed-farming activities of the Métis, their foods and general lifestyle. He recalled the high number of families who needed social assistance and discussed the gradual loss of the French language in the schools.

Élie Dumont (1886-1985), Duck Lake, 1982, 1983.

The son of Élie Dumont and Françoise Ouellette and nephew of Gabriel Dumont, he was born at St. Laurent. Mr. Dumont had recollections of important people such as Moïse Ouellette, Baptiste and William Boyer and Xavier Letendre. His life was a varied one: he worked at various labouring jobs in the bush, as a ranch hand and as a horse jockey in Western Canada and the United States. He spoke French-Métchif, English, Cree and Saulteaux. His lifestyle was intimately associated with the Cree by whom he was recognized as a medicine man. A very dignified, relaxed and somewhat reserved gentleman, he made discerning observations into the native aspect of Métis culture, economic and social activities. He also gave a personal testimony as an individual who witnessed many traditional aspects of Métis life at the turn of the century.

François (1899-1982) and Malvina Fayant, née Parenteau, St. Louis, 1981.

He was the son of Cuthbert (Corbet) Fayant and Marie-Louise Letendre; she, the daughter of Modeste Parenteau and Christine Caron, both founding families of Batoche. The couple farmed for many years on the Fayant homestead on lot 34 in the "St. Laurent Settlement." Both received little formal schooling, but Mrs. Fayant's musical and weaving skills were demonstrated during our interview. Mr. Fayant provided interesting information about the ferry, which his brother Napoléon operated for many years.

Walter Ferguson (ca. 1910-82), St-Laurent-de-Grandin, 1981.

The son of Antoine Ferguson (Fercuson) and Victorine Racette, he was born and raised on lot 24 in the "St. Laurent Settlement." Mr. Ferguson was somewhat embittered by some experiences with the Church and prejudices exhibited against the Métis. Like many young men in the

1930s, he worked as a labourer for $15 a month when he could find work. He remarked that for them the Depression was nothing new: the Métis were habitually poor — but capable of meeting their own needs. He also referred to comments of his elders regarding Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont and the secretive nature of these references. Riel, especially, was venerated but rarely spoken of publicly.

Armandine Gareau, née Gaudet (1895-1978), Batoche, 1976.

Her French-Canadian parents settled in the Bellevue district in the 1890s. She attended school and church at Batoche as a young girl and had interesting reminiscences about her Métis schoolmates, Father Moulin and Miss Dorval.

Armand Gaudet (1887-1978), Prince Albert, 1976.

Born in Quebec, Mr. Gaudet arrived at Bellevue to join relatives in 1903. He had memories of the village of Batoche around 1910, especially of the stores where he purchased his goods.

Armandine Gaudet, née Gareau (1898-1981), Batoche, 1976.

She was the youngest child of Azaric Gareau who arrived at Bellevue in 1881. His brother, Ludger, had previously settled at Batoche in 1878. Mrs. Gaudet had good recollection of the church and rectory which she visited frequently during 1910-15. She also attended social events such as "la Fête des Métifs" at Batoche.

Lumina Gaudet, née Gaudet (1886-1983), Batoche, 1976.

She arrived at Bellevue with her parents in 1894. Having attended school at Batoche during Miss Dorval's tenure, Mrs. Gaudet's account of customs, dress and daily life at St-Antoine-de-Padoue was very informative.

Sister Alice Gervais (1895-), Prince Albert, 1976.

Born in Quebec and raised at Duck Lake, Sister Alice's early life in the mixed community and her long teaching career in Saskatchewan brought her into constant contact with the Métis. She was particularly concerned about illiteracy and social problems of the 1930s and 1940s. Her views do reflect a strong French-Catholic background and her generation's perception of native peoples.

Joseph Jobin (1884-1979), Wakaw, 1976.

Mr. Jobin's father, Joseph, fought at Batoche while his uncle, Ambroise, died of wounds suffered in the 1885 battle. Mr. Jobin spent most of his life in the Batoche-Bellevue area. He farmed quite successfully and provided pertinent details illustrating Métis farming activities and social life during the crucial 1900-20 period.

Marie-Louise Langlois, formerly Caron, née Ethier, Batoche, 1981.

Mrs. Langlois (1910-) married Ernest Caron in 1932. She had previously taught school at Batoche. She resided in the Jean Caron Jr. house(s) on lot 53 in the "St. Laurent Settlement" between 1932 and 1936. In the interview, she gave a detailed description of the exterior and interior of these houses. She also recalled her mother-in-law's housekeeping activities, her milkhouse, vegetable garden and her sewing and baking. The various occupations of the Caron family, their achievements and difficulties, were also shared.

Isidore Ledoux (1874-1976), Prince Albert, 1976.

The oldest person interviewed, at 102, Mr. Ledoux's advanced age and speech impairment made recording impossible. Nevertheless, he had flawless memories of personalities such as Gabriel Dumont, Bishop Grandin, Father Moulin and his relative, the Bélangers, Fidlers and Ledoux of Batoche and Fish Creek. He experienced the prejudices of being identified as a Métis, particularly during overseas service in the First World War. He provided interesting insights into some native beliefs and traditions which were incorporated into Métis religion and lifestyle.

Jean-Bap(tiste) Letendre (ca. 1896-1980), Shellbrook, 1976.

A relative of Xavier Letendre, he was a descendant of his elder brother, Louis. He lived at Batoche until around 1912. Jean-Bap., as he was called, had particularly interesting memories about the Letendre or Batoche family: the wealth of Xavier, the alcoholism of the sons and the tuberculosis which plagued its members after 1900. He had little formal schooling, worked as a ranch hand and lost a leg in France during the First World War. A dignified and courteous gentleman, his life was marked by poverty and personal misfortune.

Thérèse Moffatt, née Lenglet (1891-), Batoche, 1976.

The daughter of Charles-Auguste Lenglet and Marie Bourdel, she was born in France. Mr. Lenglet bought a store (probably Fisher's) in Batoche in 1897. He sold groceries and dry goods on one side and had a liquor outlet on the other. Thérèse attended the school taught by Miss Dorval in 1897-1900. Her mother died in childbirth in 1899, and she spent her school years in boarding schools after her father's remarriage to the much younger Georgine d'Amours, Miss Dorval's protégée, in 1900. Mrs. Moffatt had interesting anecdotes to tell about the village, various people and social behaviour at Batoche at the turn of the century.

Alexandrine Nicolas, née Fleury (1887-), Duck Lake, 1981 and 1982.

The granddaughter of Riel's military lieutenant, Patrice Fleury, Alexandrine was born at St. Laurent and baptized by Father Fourmond. Her family went to Montana and other points west between ca. 1898 and 1905. She attended school and the Ursuline convent in St. Peter, Montana, (Riel's place of residence in 1883-84) where she learned English. Her father worked as a sheep-herder, then as a construction worker on the railroad and later as a ranch hand in Medicine Hat. The family then returned to their homestead on the west side of the South Saskatchewan River between Duck Lake and St. Laurent. Mrs. Nicolas talked about the Batoche house of her maternal grandparents, Abraham Montour and Marie Pagé, at the turn of the century. She also recalled specifically foods prepared in Métis homes, social and religious activities such as "la Fête des Métifs," the pilgrimage, and Brother Guillet's account of his miraculous cure. She spoke of Gabriel Dumont's activities at Batoche when he returned permanently around 1900 and his funeral in 1906. Mrs. Nicolas' precise references to childbirth with midwives, the preparation of natural or herbal medicines and their many "camping" trips to Saskatoon and elsewhere were most important.

Justine Nogier, formerly Caron, née Branconnier (1897-), Batoche, 1976.

Daughter of Aimable Branconnier and Marie Pilon, she was born at Batoche. She spent all her life in the community, living for a time with her maternal grandparents upon the sudden death of her mother in 1904. Nicknamed "La bichonne" because of her blonde hair, she married twice, first at 17 to Pierre Caron, and had 16 children. Justine did not attend school very long but had vivid memories of her work as a domestic for Miss Dorval. A dynamic and resourceful woman, her experiences document the difficult transitional years of the period 1910-25 at Batoche.

Marie Parenteau, née Caron (1888-1978), Batoche, 1976 and 1977.

One of the oldest women interviewed, her life exemplified much of the sacrifices and hardships endured by women. Her mother's death meant early domestic responsibilities, little schooling and frequent separation from her brothers and sisters. Her father, Théophile Caron, remarried twice and conflict followed between the various families. Mrs. Parenteau remembered the Letendre, Caron, Parenteau and Fisher families, the village area where she resided briefly and many of the typical social activities of the crucial period ca. 1900-15 at Batoche.

Ferdinand (1908-) and Alice Paulhus, née Boyer (1903-), Prince Albert, 1976.

Mr. Paulhus operated a store in Batoche in the 1940s. Mrs. Paulhus was the daughter of Raphaël Boyer and Élise Tourond. Her grandmother and uncles had witnessed the battle of Fish Creek. Their farms were burned and two uncles had died during the battle. Her parents settled at Batoche in 1896 where they operated a store and, for a time, the post-office. Mrs. Paulhus heard many stories of the "rebellion" from her uncles. She also remembered her enterprising grandmother, Mrs. Josephte Tourond, who raised a large herd of cattle. Both Mr. and Mrs. Paulhus were involved in community activities between the 1930s and 1950s.

Marguerite Perillat (1909-), Duck Lake, 1981-83.

Of French ancestry, she was born at Duck Lake. Her father owned land (lot 16) on the west side of the river at Batoche in the late 1890s. Although her memories and experiences related more specifically to the lifestyle of the French immigrants, daily contact with the Métis at Duck Lake and environs and a keen sense of observation made this sensitive and tolerant woman an invaluable source of information on the way of life in Métis and French communities after 1925. Her own personal relationships and interviews with elderly or founding citizens provided added insight into the years marking the turn of the century.

Henri (1888-1980) and Amanda Pilon, née Caron (1898-), Batoche, 1976 and Mrs. Pilon, 1981.

Mr. and Mrs. Pilon provided invluable information on the village and way of life at Batoche during the period ca. 1905-30. Mr. Pilon's parents, Barthélémi and Christine Dumas, had settled at Batoche in 1882. His father farmed and carried out various activities, among them ferryman and school trustee. Mrs. Christine Pilon had attended school at St. Boniface and gave a solid family education to her children. Mr. Pilon recalled the N.W.M.P. barracks (formerly the Letendre house) and the Fisher and Grant stories in the village.

Amanda Pilon, the daughter of Jean Caron Jr., was raised close to the parish church and rectory. She attended school in Batoche and had detailed accounts of daily life at the rectory. She also recalled many traditional foods and social activities. Her excellent memory was an indispensable tool to the reconstruction of daily life in Batoche in the early 1900s.

Adélaïde Ranger, née Pilon (1891-1981), Batoche, 1976, 1977.

A sister of Henri Pilon, Adélaïde was one of the most interesting and observant women interviewed. She lived just beside the church and rectory and therefore had direct contact with activities at the mission. She talked about the families of Batoche during her youth, the social life and activities of a young girl and woman, and her own personal experiences and disappointments. Her frank testimonies revealed the many diverse aspects of Métis society and economy at Batoche.

George Roussel, O.M.I., Marcelin, 1976.

Father Roussel was parish priest at Batoche in 1945-46. He was also stationed at the Duck Lake Indian Residential School and ministered to neighbouring missions during this period. Father Roussel provided information on the layout and use of the church and rectory as well as insight into the Batoche society.

Justine St-Germain, née Caron (1903-83), Batoche, 1978 and 1981.

Mrs. St-Germain was one of the most informative and dynamic women interviewed. Daughter of Patrice Caron and Éléonore Parenteau, she was born in Medicine Hat where her father worked briefly. She grew up in Batoche and married her cousin Raoul St-Germain, son of Frédéric and Mélanie Parenteau. Both their families had settled at Batoche in 1881-82. Justine recalled her schooling with Miss Dorval and Miss Rena Hobbs. Family responsibilities interrupted her education and she married young, at 18. Her references to traditional food preparations, social customs, folklore and lifestyle at Batoche in the late 1910s and 1920s were particularly useful to document activities during that period.

Sister Irène Schmidt (1901-), Prince Albert, 1976.

The daughter of Charles-Pantaléon and Rose-Délima Boucher, she was born at Duck Lake in 1901. An educated and observant person, she provided insight into the life of the educated and professional class of Métis. Her grandfather, Louis Schmidt, had been Riel's secretary at Red River in 1869-70. The family had migrated to the Saskatchewan district in 1882. Schmidt did not participate in the 1885 resistance, primarily because of Riel's "unstable" behaviour, according to Sister Schmidt. She remembered, in particular, her grandfather's involvement in French language issues in Saskatchewan and his intense pride as a Métis of French-Canadian heritage. Sister Schmidt's vivid recollections of the pilgrimage to St. Laurent, the Boucher, Letendre and Laviolette families, traditional goods and relations between the Métis and other ethnic groups in the area were of particular importance.

Louis Venne, (1898-), Wakaw, 1980 and 1981.

The grandson of Xavier Letendre, he was the son of Bruno Venne (1870-1900) and Florestine Letendre (1877-1901). He was raised by his paternal grandfather, Salomon Venne, and his aunt at the family ranch, southeast of Batoche. Mr. Venne's family was educated and successful. His interest in his family's history and his alertness have kept many memories alive. His sojourn in a sanatorium for treatment of tuberculosis as a young man and his account of his grandmother Marguerite Letendre's difficulties in her later years, were particularly touching. He also recalled the layout of the Venne store and residence in Batoche, his experience as a student of Miss Dorval and his aunt Elmire's role as the church organist.

In addition to the people formally interviewed, there were a number of individuals who provided regular information and assistance on this project, in particular, our Batoche site staff: Edward Bruce and Émile Parenteau, Médéric McDougall and Clovis Régnier of St. Louis and Béatrice Gervais, Léonard Pambrun, Charles Boyer and Martin Dumont of Duck Lake.

APPENDIX C

POPULATION OF MÉTIS WINTERING AT THE ST-LAURENT-DE-GRANDIN MISSION 31 DECEMBER 1871.

Heads of Families	Men	Women	Children	Total	Horses
(André, Father Alexis)*	1	-	-	1	2
(Bourgine, Father)*	1	-	-	1	-
Batoche, André	1	1	6	8	12
Batoche, Louison Jr.	1	1	3	3	10
Batoche [Letendre], Louison Sr.	1	1	-	2	12
Batoche, Xavier	1	1	3	5	16
Boyer, Baptiste	1	1	4	6	12
Cadieux, Alexandre	1	1	6	8	8
Colin, Maxime	1	-	-	1	-
Dumont, Édouard (A)	1	1	2	4	12
Dumont, Édouard (B)	1	-	-	1	-
Dumont, Élie	1	1	2	4	10
Dumont, Gabriel	1	1	1	3	10
Dumont, Isidore dit Escapoo	1	1	2	4	20
Dumont, Isidore Jr.	1	1	7	9	18
Dumont, Jean dit Chakasta	1	1	-	2	18
Dumont, Jean Jr.	1	1	7	9	18
Dumont, Louis	1	-	-	1	1
Dumont, Vital	1	1	3	5	8
Falcon, Athanase	1	1	1	3	2
Ferguson, Antoine	1	1	4	6	8
Fisher, Alexandre	1	1	2	4	5
Fleury, Antoine	1	1	2	4	8
Gariépy, Philippe	1	1	4	6	20
Gariépy, Pierre	1	1	9	11	10
Gladu, Antoine	1	1	2	4	5
Hamelin, Alexandre	1	1	4	6	18

Heads of Families	Men	Women	Children	Total	Horses
Hamelin, Elzéar	1	1	1	3	3
Hamelin, Joseph	1	1	5	9	18
Hamelin, Josué	1	1	5	7	8
Houle, François	1	1	6	8	6
Laframboise, Augustin	1	1	4	6	12
Laverdure, Pierre	1	1	3	5	8
Lafond, Baptiste	1	1	5	7	4
Landry, Lect	1	1	4	6	6
Masson, François	1	-	-	1	-
Moreau, [?] widow	-	1	-	1	1
Moreau, Jonas	1	1	3	5	5
Ouellette, Marguerite*	-	1	-	1	-
Ouellette, Moïse	1	1	5	7	18
Parenteau, Alexandre	1	1	3	5	6
Parenteau, Baptiste	1	1	7	9	30
Parenteau, Élie	1	1	3	5	6
Parenteau, Gabriel	1	1	2	4	6
Parenteau, Isidore	1	1	-	2	6
Parenteau, José	1	1	6	8	12
Parenteau, Joseph Jr.	1	1	-	2	6
Parenteau, Joseph Sr.	1	1	4	6	12
Parenteau, Louis	1	1	6	8	10
Parenteau, Raphaël	1	1	-	2	4
Patenaude, Joseph	1	-	-	1	2
Plante, Antoine	1	-	-	1	5
Plante, Xavier	1	1	-	2	3
Poitras, Ignace	1	1	7	9	12
Primeau, Baptiste	1	1	1	3	8
Racette, Augustin	1	1	4	6	6
Racette, Charles Jr.	1	1	6	8	12
Racette, Charles Sr.	1	-	-	1	-
Racette, Joseph	1	1	5	6	12
St-Denis, Célestin	1	1	-	2	3
Sansregret, Pierre	1	1	5	7	8
Short, James	1	1	6	8	12
Smith, [?] widow	-	1	6	7	6
Thomas, Charles	1	1	1	3	10
Vandale, Baptiste (A)	1	1	6	8	12
Vandale, Baptiste (B)	1	1	1	3	2
Villeneuve, Théophile	1	1	5	7	6
Welsh, John	1	-	-	1	4
TOTALS	63	58	198	321	567

**Except for Fathers André and Bourgine, and Marguerite Ouellette who was a servant, all the others were hunters.*

(A), (B) = Two people with the same name.

Source: GA, Richard Hardisty Papers, File 32.

APPENDIX D

THE FAMILIES OF BATOCHE PARISH, 1924

François Arcand
Mathy Bilyk
Chrysostome Boyer
Raphaël Boyer
Robert Boyer
Tobie Boyer
Joseph Branconnier
Alfred Caron
Arthur Caron
Eugène Caron
Jean Caron
Patrice Caron
Théophile Caron
Alfred Carrière
Cléophas Champagne
Daniel Charette
Daniel Dumas
Isidore Dumas
Élie Dumont
Joseph Dumont
Cuthbert (Corbet) Fayant
Antoine Ferguson
Antoine Ferguson (Sr.)
Georges Ferguson
Joseph Ferguson
Bruno Fidler
Norbert Fidler
Ambroise Gervais
Clémence Gervais (née Boyer)
Edmond Gervais
Joseph Gervais
Moïse Gervais
Napoléon Gervais
Pierre Gervais
Joseph Ladéroute
Alfred Lafontaine
Joseph Lafontaine
Albert Laplante
Toussaint Laplante
Charles Laviolette
Eugène Letendre
Louis Letendre
Moïse Marcotte
Baptiste Ouellette
Marie Ouellette (née Boyer, widow of Moïse Jr.)
Alexandre Parenteau
François Parenteau
Jérôme Parenteau

Joachim Parenteau
Laurent Parenteau
Louis Parenteau
Modeste Parenteau
William Parenteau
Albert Pilon
Alexandre Pilon
Barthélémi Pilon
Henri Pilon
Joseph Pilon Jr.
Joseph Pilon Sr.
Louis Pilon
William Pilon
William John Pilon
Michel Poitras
Félix Potty
Jérôme Racette
Jean-Baptiste Ranger
Raoul St-Denis
Frédéric St-Germain
Raoül St-Germain
François Slater
Francis Tourond
Napoléon Venne
Robert Venne
Widow of Jean-Baptiste Parenteau

Source: Prince Albert Diocese, Batoche Parish.

APPENDIX E

MÉTIS SONGS

I. *C'est au champ de bataille (La lettre de sang).*

Composition attributed to Louis Riel. Collected in the Lebret, Saskatchewan area. Sung by Gaspard Jeannotte around 1957. Courtesy of G. Burtonshaw, Calgary.

1. C'est au champ de bataille,
J'ai fait crier mes douleurs,
Où tant qu'un doute se passe
Ça fait frémir les coeurs.
Or je r'çois-t-une lettre
De ma chère maman
J'avais ni plum' ni encre
Pour pouvoir lui écrire.

2. Or je pris mon canif,
Je le trempai dans mon sang
Pour écrir' une lettre
À ma chère maman.
Quand ell' r'cevra cett' lettre
Tout écrit' de sang
Ses yeux baignant de larmes,
Son coeur s'allant mourant.

3. S'y jette à genoux par terre
En appelant ses enfants:
Priez pour votr' p'tit frère
Qui est au régiment.
Mourir, c'est pour mourir,
Chacun meurt à son tour;
J'aim' mieux mourir en brave,
Faut tous mourir un jour.

II. *Chanson de Louis Riel.*

Composed in Dakota in honour of his sister Henriette (St. Louis, Saskatchewan version.)

Ma soeur tu n'étais que fillette
Au premier beau jour du printemps
Quand j'ai parti, chère Henriette,
Tu n'avais pas encore quinze ans.
De tous mes travaux politiques
Et mes luttes au Canada
Viens me conter les peines publiques
Du peuple que mon coeur fonda.

Banni, je viens auprès des lignes
Contempler mon pays natal
Revoir mes amis bons et dignes
Et mes parents de Saint-Vital.
Ils sont venus me voir par groupes
Chez mon ami Norman Gingras
Ils sont venus boire à ma coupe
Pendant les fêtes et les jours gras.

Ma soeur, tu viens faire ta visite
Au commencement du mois d'août.
En te voyant, mon coeur palpite
Ma soeur, ah je t'aime beaucoup.
Reçois de moi la bienvenue
Mon coeur t'embrasse en soupirant
Lorsque mes yeux t'ont reconnue
C'était ceux d'un frère content.

J'aime ta taille mince et svelte,
Ton marcher modeste et posé
Cet esprit métis, ta silhouette
Joyeuse, franche et sans souci.
Tu prends soin de ta chevelure
Selon les règles du bon sens
Et les attraits de ta figure
Sont beaux sans être extravagants.

Les traits de ta figure brune
Apparaissent à mes yeux contents
Comme la clarté de la lune
Lorsque les nuits sont au beau temps.
Et le point où le jour se couche
Ne sera jamais plus vermeil
Que le sourire de ta bouche.
Ton regard me porte conseil.

Ah! que mon âme est réjouie
D'entendre résonner ta voix
Elle est plus douce à mon ennui
Que la musique des grands bois.
Retourne chez toi, Henriette,
Dans notre cher Manitoba
Va dire aux personnes inquiètes
Que je languis dans les États.

III. *Courtisan malheureux ou Riche marchand malheureux.*

Sung by Antoine Ferguson (1884-1976), St-Laurent-de-Grandin (collected by Henri Létourneau, St. Boniface, 1972).

D'un tour plaisant, un riche marchand,
Courtisant une dame, ce pauvre courtisan,
Lui en a bien coûté 50 mille francs
Sans compter toute la belle équipage[1]
Qu'il avait laissée à ce matelot pour gage,
Il s'attendait pas, d'avoir ce beau butin,
Ce beau, ce matelot marin.

Ça faisait bien deux ans qu'il était en voyage.
Et arrivant à son port
Tout aussitôt débarquant de son vaisseau
Pensant d'aller se coucher avec sa femme
Et son coeur brûlait de mille flammes
Il s'en va tout droit chez lui
"Femme, ouvrez la porte a ton cher mari."
La femme tout en tremblant dit au favori:
"Comment allons-nous faire? Retirez-vous d'ici
Car, par ma foi, voilà mon mari.

Bien promptement mettez votre capote
Car aussitôt je vais lui ouvrir la porte
Et quand vous serez esquivé
Je me défendrai comme je pourrai."
En ouvrant la porte il voit un ombrage
Qui fait comme un sauvage
"Femme qu'est-ce qu'il y a ici
C'est-ti le diable ou bien c'est un esprit?"
"Mon cher mari j'en ai point de lumière
Car aussi bien rien de quoi en faire
Couchons bien promptement
Dedans notre lit on sera bien chaudement."
Ce matelot marin encore bien plus fin
Mais il savait de quoi en faire
"Et qu'on m'apporte mon batte-feu
Avec lequel je fais du feu quand je veux
Bien promptement et allume la chandelle
Car aussi noir nous aurons de la crelle[2]
Et tous deux jeunes rigodons
Je me croirais foutu de me coucher à tâtons."
Allumant le feu il vit à ses yeux
Une belle équipage, il vit un beau trésor
Une montre d'or, un sac de louis d'or,
Au pied du lit une paire de bottes,
Un bel habit garni de la sorte,
Un beau chapeau pluché,
Une paire de culottes toutes enpercelées[3]

Ce matelot marin dit en souriant
Regardant sa femme:
"Ma femme quoique tu es jolie
Car par ma foi, il a bien payé ton prix
Il est donc vrai je porte des cornettes
Et mes frères des sonnettes
Et cela mène autant de bruit
Comme tous ces carosses qui roulent dans Paris."

Ce pauvre courtisan vient tout en tremblant
Mais cogne à la porte
En disant qu'il était un marchand
"Qui est celui qui frappe à ma porte
Mais c'est-ti toi que le diable t'emporte
Je garde tout ce qu'il y a
Ça me servira pour faire laver mes draps."

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[1] un bel équipage
[2] unknown word
[3] pearl-studded

APPENDIX F

CLAIMS FOR LOSSES SUFFERED IN 1885, BATOCHE AND VICINITY

A: "Loyal" citizens who did not take up arms against the government

B: "Rebels" or persons "who have contributed to their own losses"

C: Persons absent from their homes or travelling during the insurrection

Claim Granted	Claimant(s) ($)	Cat.	($)
Jean-Baptiste Arcand	934.15	B	0.00
Susette Arcand	388.00	B	0.00
Caroline Beauchemin	1525.00	B	0.00
Abraham Bélanger	325.00	A	10.00
Charles-Eugène Boucher	885.50	A	373.00
Jean-Baptiste Boucher*			
Jean-Baptiste Boyer	9330.34	A	6461.13
William Boyer	1596.75	A	386.10
Ernestine Breland	1291.55	B	0.00
Félicité Breland (Boyer), wife of Gilbert	186.75	B	0.00
Moïse Bremner	322.00	A	205.00
Marguerite Caron (Dumas), wife of Jean	4681.50	B	0.00
Virginie Caron (Parenteau), wife of Jean Jr.	1936.00	B	0.00
Cécile Carrière (Beauchemin), wife of Charles	996.00	B	0.00

Claim Granted	Claimant(s) ($)	Cat.	($)
Patrice Carrière	1583.00	B	0.00
Philippe C. Chamberland	410.00	A	183.00
Ambroise Champagne	860.00	B	0.00
Cléophas Champagne	435.00	B	0.00
Emmanuel Champagne	13 310.00	B	0.00
Charlotte Delorme (Gervais), wife of Norbert	888.65	B	0.00
Jean-Baptiste Delorme	600.00	B	0.00
William Delorme	253.00	B	0.00
Télesphore Demers	6805.00	C	0.00
Louise Desjarlais	38.90	B	0.00
Marguerite Desjarlais, wife of Paul	1216.25	B	0.00
Ambroise Dubois	300.00	B	0.00
Angélique Dubois (Caron), wife of Ambroise	205.50	B	0.00
Rosalie Dubois	40.00	B	0.00
(Mrs.) Gabriel Dufour	380.00	B	0.00
Véronique Dumas (Ouellette), wife of Michel	556.00	B	0.00
Judith Dumont (Parenteau), widow of Isidore	415.00	B	0.000
Justine Dumont (Short), widow of Ambroise	952.50	A	533.10
Isabelle Fayant (McGillis), wife of Cuthbert	769.00	B	0.00
Josephte Fidler (Laplante), wife of François	1260.75	B	0.00
Véronique Fidler (Gervais), wife of Baptiste	100.00	B	0.00
William Fidler	1095.00	B	0.00
Alexandre P. Fisher	378.00	B	0.00
Georges Fisher Sr.	14 283.00	A	10 442.92
Patrice Fleury	788.00	B	0.00
Patrice Fleury Jr.	218.50	B	0.00
Azarie Gareau(lt)	492.00	A	50.00
Ludger Gareau(lt)	7189.21	A	2598.80
Rosalie Gariépy (Parenteau), wife of Philippe	1103.70	B	0.00
Françoise Gervais (Lafournaise), wife of Patrice	350.00	B	0.00
Françoise Gervais (Ledoux), wife of Basile	1212.00	A	583.00
Jean-Baptiste Gervais	596.00	B	0.00
Roger Goulet	1957.00	A	1261.00
Catherine Henry (Beauchemin), wife of Pierre	1058.70	B	0.00
Kerr Brothers	16 343.50	A	3402.50

Claim Granted	Claimant(s) ($)	Cat.	($)
François Ladouceur	294.00	B	0.00
Ferdinand Ladret	261.85	A	100.00
Calixte Lafontaine	727.00	B	0.00
Louise Lafontaine (Gervais), wife of Calixte	902.00	B	0.00
Alexandre Lamirande	140.00	B	0.00
Antoine Laplante	343.50	A	228.00
Élise Laplante (Gervais), wife of Toussaint	385.00	B	0.00
Jean-Baptiste Laplante	525.00	B	0.00
Hélène Ledoux (Poitras), wife of Pierre	995.00	B	0.00
Maxime Lépine	1829.00	B	0.00
Angélique Letendre (Dumas), wife of Louis	682.45	B	0.00
Catherine Letendre (Godon), widow of André	1443.00	B	0.00
Xavier Letendre dit Batoche	32 972.44	A	19 295.59
Augustin Lévêque	500.50	C	0.00
Clémentine Lévêque	1073.00	A	270.00
Alexandre McDougall	949.00	B	0.00
Isabelle McGillis (Poitras), wife of Modeste	228.20	B	0.00
Abraham Montour	508.00	C	0.00
Caroline Montour (Dumont), widow of Baptiste	115.00	B	0.00
George Ness	1805.00	A	831.00
Adolphus Nolin	443.00	A	279.00
André Nolin	189.00	B	0.00
Charles Nolin	9915.00	A	1275.00
Jean-Baptiste Normand	10.50	B	0.00
Élisabeth Ouellette (Dumont), wife of Moïse	828.00	B	0.00
Thérèse Ouellette (Houle), widow of Joseph	270.00	B	0.00
Alexandre Parenteau	340.00	B	0.00
Daniel Parenteau	299.66	B	0.00
Gabriel Parenteau	171.00	B	0.00
Hélène Parenteau (Normand), wife of Pierre Jr.	263.00	B	0.00
Jean-Baptiste Parenteau	1600.00	B	0.00
Joseph Parenteau Jr.	141.50	B	0.00
Léon Parenteau	285.00	B	0.00
Marianne Parenteau (Caron) wife of Pierre	537.00	B	0.00
Patrice Parenteau	224.50	B	0.00
Pierre Parenteau (Pierriche)	2392.00	B	0.00

Claim Granted	Claimant(s) ($)	Cat.	($)
Véronique Parenteau (St-Germain), wife of Moïse	242.00	B	0.00
Angélique Pilon, wife of Joseph	1939.75	B	0.00
Barthélémi Pilon	1657.70	B	0.00
Joseph Pilon Jr.	504.50	B	0.00
Joseph Pilon Sr.	1776.00	B	0.00
Hélène Poitras (McGillis), wife of Ignace	1817.25	B	0.00
Caroline Racette (Nolin), wife of Jérôme	410.000	B	0.00
Hélène Racette (Boyer), widow of Charles	140.00	A	115.00
Octave Régnier	773.00	B	0.00
Antoine Richard*			
Louis Riguidel	95.00	A	57.00
Jean-Baptiste Rocheleau Jr.	722.00	B	0.00
Marie Rocheleau (Carrière), wife of Baptiste Sr.	2416.00	B	0.00
Modeste Rocheleau	1285.00	B	0.00
Catherine Ross (Delorme), widow of Donald	2477.00	B	0.00
Élise Ross (Dufour), widow of Baptiste	300.00	A	154.00
Frédéric St-Germain	45.00	B	0.00
Louis Schmidt	224.50	A	84.50
Richard Tees	500.00	A	65.00
Hélène Thomas (Letendre), wife of Charles	492.40	B	0.00
Catherine Tourond (Gervais), wife of Pierre	1171.85	B	0.00
Josephte Tourond (Gervais), widow of Calixte	1167.85	B	0.00
Josephte Tourond (Paul), widow of Joseph	8451.00	A	2804.67
Norbert Turcotte	470.82	B	0.00
Alphonsine Vandal (Henry), wife of Antoine	714.00	B	0.00
Élise Vandal (Champagne), wife of Joseph	528.00	B	0.00
Élisa Vandal (Poitras), wife of Pierre	93.00	B	0.00
Élisa Vandal (Poitras), wife of Pierre	405.00	B	0.00
Isabelle Vandal (Branconnier), wife of Roger	983.00	B	0.00
Isabelle Vandal (Branconnier), wife of Roger	592.50	B	0.00

Claim Granted	Claimant(s) ($)	Cat.	($)
Jean-Baptiste Vandal	2341.00	B	0.00
Joseph Vandal Jr. (deceased)	319.00	B	137.50
Virginie Vandal (Boyer), wife of William	739.00	B	0.00
David Venne	6032.00	A	2186.90
Napoléon Venne	1464.00	A	823.00
Salomon Venne	41 899.21	A	10 978.21
Alexandre Vermette	65.00	B	0.00
Marguerite Vermette, widow of Joseph	1942.00	B	0.00
Marie-Rose Vermette	247.75	B	0.00
Mathilde Villeneuve	447.00	B	0.00
Rosalie Villeneuve (Champagne), wife of Isidore	384.50	B	0.00
Walters and Baker	28 750.00	A	13 236.35

Source: NA, RG15, vol. 513, 914-916, 931-932.

**Joint claim with Alexandre McDougall (see under that name)*

APPENDIX G

LAND SCRIP BENEFICIARIES FOR BATOCHE AND VICINITY, 1885-87

I. Beneficiaries according to the 1885-87 orders-in-council: Métis residing in the North-West Territories and born before 15 July 1870

Name	Scrip ($)	Date
Duck Lake		
Marie Arcand (widow of James Swain)	160	— 1885
Prince-Albert		
Cléophas Champagne	240	30 September 1886
Élise Champagne (Lafournaise)	240	30 " "
Judith Champagne (Langer)	160	30 " "
Baptiste Ouellette	240	30 " "
Baptiste Parenteau Jr.	240	30 " "
Abraham Ouellette	240	1 October 1886
Bernard Ouellette	240	1 " "
Joseph Ouellette	240	1 " "
Julien Ouellette	240	1 " "
Caroline Bélanger	240	6 October "
Pierre Ledoux	240	6 " "
Alexandre Letendre	240	6 " "
André Letendre	240	6 " "
Véronique Parenteau (St-Germain)	240	6 " "
Virginie Ladret	240	9 October "

Name	Scrip ($)	Date
St. Laurent		
John Fayant (as heir)	208	12 October 1886
Azarie Champagne	240	13 October "
Louise Desjarlais	160	13 " "
Rose Fagnant	208	13 " "
William Fayant (as heir)	208	13 " "
Marguerite Flamand	240	13 " "
Catherine Ledoux (Dubois)	240	13 " "
Hélène Malaterre	160	13 " "
Marie McGillis	240	— 1886
Cyprien Ouellette	240	13 " "
Joseph Ouellette	160	13 " "
Elzéar Parisien	240	13 " "
Marie-Louise Patenaude	240	13 " "
Madeleine Paul	160	13 " "
Corbet Trottier	240	13 " "
Thérèse Vallée	240	13 " "
Corbet Fagnant Jr.	208	14 October "
Rosalie Laframboise	240	14 " "
Louise Ledoux	160	14 " "
Norbert Sauvé Jr.	240	14 " "
Albert Trottier	240	14 " "
Marguerite Bottineau (widow of Alex McGillis)	160	15 October "
Euphrosine Cayen	160	15 " "
Julie Ducharme	160	15 " "
Charles Fayant (as heir)	208	15 " "
Hélène McGillis (Poitras)	160	15 " "
Isidore McKay	160	15 " "
Baptiste Ouellette	160	15 " "
Charlotte Bourassa	160	16 October "
David Lafond	240	16 " "
Pierre Lafontaine (alias Fagnant)	240	16 " "
Daniel Laframboise	240	16 " "
Édouard Laframboise	240	16 " "
Marie-Anne McKay	240	16 " "
Abraham Montour Jr.	240	16 " "
Abraham Montour Sr.	160	16 " "
Clémence Montour	240	16 " "
Justine Montour	240	16 " "
Marie Montour	240	16 " "
Marie Pagé	160	16 " "
Francis Primeau	240	18 October "
Jean-Baptiste Robillard	240	18 " "

Name	Scrip ($)	Date
Batoche		
Judith Dumont (widow of Pascal Montour)	240	11 July 1885
Thérèse Arcand (heir of Baptiste Lafond)	50	18 July "
Marie Hallet (widow of Louis Letendre Sr.)	160	18 " "
Édouard Lafond	11	18 " "
Josephte Patenaude	240	18 " "
Hélène Boyer (widow of Charles Racette)	145	20 July "
Élise Champagne	240	20 " "
Hélène Letendre (daughter of Xavier)	240	20 " "
Marie McGillis	240	20 " "
Cécile Ouellette	160	20 " "
Rose Parenteau	240	20 " "
Virgine Racette (heir of Charles)	15	20 " "
Josephte Sauvé	240	20 " "
Pascal Montour Jr.	240	19 October 1886
André Nolin	240	12 October 1887

B. Beneficiaries by right of inheritance, 1886 Commission

Heirs of	Petitioner(s)	Scrip ($)
Batoche		
Élise Ouellette	Marguerite Ouellette and 4 other children	240
Alexandre Poitras	Ignace Poitras	240
Joseph Thomas	Charles Thomas	160
St-Laurent		
Joseph Azure	Élisa Champagne	240
Jean-Baptiste Cayen	Isidore Cayen	160
Louis Denoyers	Arcand children	160
Catherine Desjarlais	Louise Desjarlais	160
Baptiste Fleury	Antoine Fleury	240
Jean-Baptiste Fleury	Patrice Fleury	240
Calixte Gariépy	Louise Lafournaise	240
Josephte Hamelin	Isidore Lafontaine	160
Basile Ledoux	Louise Desjarlais, wife and children	240
Eusèbe Ledoux	Catherine Roussin, wife and 6 children	160
Alexandre McGillis	3 sisters	160

Heirs of	Petitioner(s)	Scrip ($)
Paul McGillis	5 brothers and sisters	240
Madeleine Montour	Marie-Louise and Hilaire Patenaude	160
Angèle Ouellette	Baptiste Ouellette	240
Cécile Ouellette	Joseph Ouellette	240
Charles Ouellette	Joseph Ouellette	240
St-Pierre Ouellette	Baptiste Ouellette	240
Michel Patenaude	Josephte Parenteau	160
Charles Racette	Hélène Boyer, wife and 4 children	160
Paulet Roussin	Caroline Roussin	160
Norbert Sauvé Sr.	Norbert Jr.	160
André Trottier	Joseph Trottier	240

Source: NA, RG15, DII, 8 (b) (e).

APPENDIX H

BENEFICIARIES OF LAND SCRIP, BATOCHE AND VICINITY, 1900

I. Beneficiaries according to the 1899-1900 orders-in-council: 240 acres to Métis born between 15 July 1870 and 31 December 1885

Batoche

Jean-Baptiste Beaugrand dit Champagne
Tobie Boyer
Moïse Carrière
Marie Virginie Cayen
Georgine d'Amour
Joséphine Deschamps
Madeleine Deschamps
Bethsey Dumont (née Boyer)
Joseph Dumont (son of Isidore)
Henriette Dumas
Alfred Fayant
Daniel Fayant
Joseph Fayant
Josué Gariépy
John Letendre (son of Xavier)
Mary Jane Letendre
J.-Baptiste Ouellette
Moïse Ouellette
Modeste Parenteau
Vital Ross
Mathilde Thomas (née Parenteau)
Victor Thomas
Florestine Venne (née Letendre)

Duck Lake

Baptiste Arcand Jr.
Marguerite Bourassa
Baptiste Boyer Jr.
Marguerite Boyer (wife of Paul)
Angélique Cardinal
Justine Cardinal
Florestine Colin, widow of Maxime Poitras
Maxime Collin
Marie Deschamps (wife of Baptiste)
Jean Dumont
Joseph Dumont (son of Élie)
Édouard Fisher
Roger Gariépy
Georges Lafleur
François Larocque
Norbert Laviolette
Marguerite Lussier (wife of Thomas)
Patrice Primeau
Mélanie Ross (wife of Joseph)
William Sansregret
Adolphe Smith
Joseph Vandal(e)
William Vandal Jr.

Prince Albert
Joseph Branconnier
Joseph Delorme
Rosalie Dumont
Joseph Ferguson
Victor Gariépy
Élisa Gervais
Louis Gervais
Rosalie Lafond
Marie-Rose Lafontaine
Gabriel Laplante
Hyacinthe Laplante
Marie Laplante
Agathe Lefort
 (wife of Norbert Henry)
Agnès Marion
George Alex Marion
Alexandre Parenteau
Joachim Parenteau
Élisa Ross (wife of Vital)
François Slater
Baptiste Vandal
Frédéric Vandal

St. Louis
Pantaléon Schmidt

II. Parents inheriting land of deceased children

Batoche
William Boyer
Moïse Carrière
Isidore Dumas
Édouard Dumont
Corbet Fidler
Daniel Gariépy
Lazare Hamelin
Louis Letendre
Baptiste Parenteau
Ignace Poitras
Charles Thomas
William Thorn(e)
Pierre Vandal
Salomon Venne

Battleford
George Ness

Duck Lake
Charles Carrière
Élie Dumont
Ambroise Fisher
Joseph Parenteau
William Vandal Sr.

Lethbridge
Patrice Fleury
Abraham Montour

Pincher Creek
Ludger Gareau(lt)
 (Madeleine Delorme)
Charles Smith (Élisa Delorme)

Prince Albert
Charles Adams
Baptiste Deschamps
Antoine Ferguson
Pierre Henry
Louis Marion
Jonas Moreau
Moïse Ouellette
Baptiste Parenteau
Raphaël Parenteau
Jérôme Racette

III. Land scrip issued to Métis formerly from Batoche and vicinity

Battleford
Baptiste Boyer (son of Baptiste)
Joseph Nault (son of Élie)
Malvina Nault (daughter of Élie)
Éléonore Nolin (wife of Augustin)
Jean Plante (son of Basile)

Lethbridge
Amanda Caron (née Parenteau)
  wife of Théophile
Job Falcon (son of Athanase)
Léon Nault (son of Napoléon)
Virginie Nault (daughter of Napoléon)
William, Alexandre and
  Florestine St-Germain
  (children of Frédéric)

Maple Creek
Alfred Breland

Pincher Creek
Alexis Gervais (son of Cuthbert)
Joseph Gervais (son of Cuthbert)

Winnipeg
Délima Boucher (daughter of Baptiste)
Élie Carrière (son of Napoléon)
Napoléon Carrière (son of Napoléon)
Norbert Lépine (son of Athanase)
Mathilde Nault (née Carrière)
  wife of André

Source: NA, RG15, DII, 8 (c) (e).

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Seat of the North-West resistance, was Batoche also witness to the Métis social and economic disintegration? Diane Paulette Payment studies the Métis communities along the South Saskatchewan River, in particular Batoche, between 1870 and 1930, and concludes that "the free people" pursued their activities and endeavoured to control their own destiny.

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